

SMOKESHOP

THE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY ON SPECIALTY TOBACCO RETAILING

SMOKESHOPMAG.COM | OCTOBER 2018

Davidoff Brooklyn

Williamsburg Rising: Boris Grossman, Owner of Matador Cigars, teams up with Davidoff of Geneva for its First New York City Boutique Outside Manhattan

Plus:

- > Joya de Nicaragua, Nicaragua's First Cigar Maker, Marks 50th Anniversary
- > Cheyenne International Brings "Startup Energy" to OTP Category
- > NATO: Why a Flavored Tobacco Ban Isn't the Answer





CATTLE BARON

Cigars

RATINGS

Cigar Authority: Stockyard **90**

Cigar Coop: Stockyard **91**

Kaplowitz: Trail Boss **A-**
Bull **A-**

Smoke Magazine: Trail Boss **93**



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Editor's LETTER

Smokeshop pauses this issue to share recent news of industry honors, bestowed upon an retailer by CRA, and numerous manufacturers selected by consumers in this year's *Cigar Journal* magazine Cigar Trophy Awards.

Veronica Fenner, Stag Tobacconist, Awarded CRA 2018 Defense of Liberty Award

On August 29th, **Cigar Rights of America (CRA)** presented its annual **Defense of Liberty** award to **Veronica Fenner** and **Stag Tobacconist** of Colorado Springs, Colorado. This honor is presented to recognize "significant contributions to the work and mission of CRA," explains the Washington, D.C.-based grassroots advocacy organization dedicated to protecting consumer's right to enjoy premium cigars. In announcing the award, CRA stated, "Stag Tobacconist has, since the creation of CRA, been a national leader in recruiting consumer members, designing unique recruitment efforts, offering store discounts to CRA members, as well as having a significant role with the premium cigar legislative agenda from their state capitol in Denver to the Halls of Congress in Washington, DC. The leadership of Veronica Fenner and Stag Tobacconist is truly a national model for success."



Veronica Fenner, owner, Stag Tobacconist (left) is presented the 2018 CRA Defense of Liberty Award by CRA executive director, Glynn Loope (right).

2018 Cigar Trophy Awards by Cigar Journal

On Friday evening, September 21, 2018, in conjunction with the InterTabac Trade Fair in Dortmund, Germany, *Cigar Journal Magazine* announced the winners of its 2018 Cigar Trophy Awards. Each year, readers are asked to nominate their top candidates in the five categories, and then determine the winner from the top five nominations. The winners for Best Brand were: Cuba (Bolívar), Dominican Republic (Davidoff Winston Churchill Late Hour); Honduras (Alec Bradley Prensado Lost Art); Nicaragua (Perdomo Reserve 10th Anniversary Connecticut); USA (Cornelius & Anthony Cornelius). The winners for Best Cigar 2018 were: Cuba (Montecristo 80 Aniversario); Dominican Republic (La Flor Dominicana La Volcada); Honduras (Plasencia Cosecha 146 Toro); Nicaragua (Padrón 1964 Anniversary Series Presidente Maduro). The winners of Best Value 2018 were: Dominican Republic (Kristoff Original Maduro); Honduras (Asylum 13 Corojo); and Nicaragua (Oliva Serie O). The winner of Best Cigar Accessory 2018 was PerfecDraw, and the Winner of Best Cigar Lounge 2018 was BURN by Rocky Patel, Pittsburgh. The Charity & Community 2018 winner was Pronica, a project initiated by Sasja van Horssen and Joya de Nicaragua, which donates to charities a portion of the revenues of each cigar sold. The Outstanding Art 2018 winner was Subculture Studios, Estelí, the artists' collective founded by Drew Estate. The Ambassador 2018 winner, which recognizes efforts to promote cigar culture, was the German city of Lorsch, whose tobacco project "Tabakprojekt Stadt Lorsch" is bringing the cultivation and processing of tobacco back to the center of society. Finally, the 2018 Lifetime Achievement award winner was Carlos Fuente Jr.

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Cigars International Opens Super Store in Dallas, Texas

DALLAS—Cigars International launched a Super Store in the suburbs of Dallas-Fort Worth in September, marking Cigars International's fourth retail store and the first outside of its home state of Pennsylvania.

The store was built in just six months and is located in a sprawling, mixed-use development called Grandscape in The Colony. Craig Reynolds, president of Cigars International said, "Given that the handmade cigar category was built on the kinds of personal interactions that can only be had in-store, our new location gives cigar lovers a unique venue for experiencing the camaraderie of fellow smokers. Our stores are meant to complement the traditional cigar shop experience and enhance the cigar lover's appreciation for handmade cigars."

The Cigars International Super Store at the Colony encompasses more than 7,000 square feet including an outdoor smoking lounge. A 2,500 sq. ft., glass-enclosed humi-



dor anchors the space, which also includes a bar, a Club Macanudo lounge, 32-foot-high ceilings, and an impressive array of handmade cigars and accessories.

The design of the Super Store mimics that of a curing barn. The rectangular shape and shades on the sides of the building represent the characteristic look the Northeast's iconic tobacco sheds, and the truss work is a design element that was carried over from two of Cigars International's other stores.

The grand opening took place on Saturday, September 22, and Cigars International estimates that more than 1,000 cigar enthusiasts visited the store for the festivities. While in-store, cigar lovers had the chance to purchase a limited edition Macanudo Inspirado cigar, available only at the Colony location. Made with aged tobaccos, the cigars are presented in individual coffin boxes, selling for \$17.99 for the Toro Grande, and \$19.99 for the Double Corona.



New&Notable

> **The Leaf Cigar and Pipe Shop** in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, celebrated its ribbon-cutting and grand opening on July 13. The business is owned by 25-year-old Pine Bluff native and cigar enthusiast Jamal Gordon, who created a relaxing lounge space with chairs, sofas, tables, and TVs to encourage mingling and conversation, with free Cuban coffee on Saturday mornings.

> **Steger's Sigaro Italiano Cigar Lounge** in Steger, Illinois, celebrated its grand opening on October 5th. Opened by business partners Ron Newquist, Paul Franze, and Jimmy Hanus, the lounge offers a "top-flight club atmosphere" with plushly-appointed interiors including leather sofas and chairs, big-screen televisions, air-purifiers, and a cutting-edge sound system, and a wide array of premium cigars in stock.

FDA Scrambles on Youth Vaping

On Sept. 12, Food & Drug Administration (FDA) Commissioner Scott Gottlieb, M.D. announced new steps to address an "epidemic of youth e-cigarette use." Two weeks later, Reuters news agency published a report regarding the FDA's failure to enforce its own rule banning the sale of new, unapproved vaping devices after an August 2016 cutoff, noting the U.S. market has been flooded with a wave of high-nicotine, Juul-like devices, as well as device by major companies including B.A.T. and Imperial Tobacco. Gottlieb announced that FDA sent letters to five e-cigarette manufacturers whose products were documented being sold to underage buyers during an enforcement blitz that began in spring 2018 by focusing on Juul, and then expanded, resulting in more than 1,100 warning letters to stores for the illegal sale of e-cigarettes to minors. Those five manufacturers collectively represent more than 97 percent of the current market for e-cigs (Juul, Vuse, MarkTen, blu e-cigs, and Logic), and have been tasked by FDA to provide "robust plans on how they'll convincingly address the widespread use of their products by minors" by Nov. 12, or it will "revisit the FDA's exercise of enforcement discretion for products currently on the market."

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► Debonaire House Re-Establishes In-house Distribution, Sales and Marketing, Ends Drew Estate Agreement

MIAMI—Debonaire House has begun distributing its own products in the United States, and is now directly managing all facets of its U.S. business operations including sales, and marketing, functions that had been handled by Drew Estate since 2016.

The company has entered into a partnership program with United Parcel Service (UPS) called Cigars Direct which allows Debonaire House to ship its ultra premium Debonaire and Indian Motorcycle cigars directly from their factory in the Dominican Republic to tobacconists and cigar retailers in the United States, absorbing all customs and excise functions. De Los Reyes Cigars, the Dominican Republic factory where Debonaire House manufactures its cigars, also uses the program, among other Dominican cigar makers.

"Debonaire House has now reached the point where we need to possess captive distribution for our Debonaire Ultra Premium, Indian Motorcycle, and Debonaire House brands," said Philip S. Zanghi III, President of



DEBONAIRE
HOUSE

Debonaire House in a statement announcing the changes in June, noting it is "an important milestone in the ongoing evolution of our company. We are very excited about the future of the Debonaire

Ideal and look forward to the next chapter in our company's journey."

While the changeover was originally planned for January 2019, Debonaire House was able to roll out the changes in August.

"Working with the great team at Drew Estate over the past 2-1/2 years has been a rewarding experience," said Philip S. Zanghi III, president of Debonaire House. "I am blessed and humbled by the successful partnership our companies have enjoyed together."

Jonathan Drew, president of Drew Estate, noted that the relationship of Debonaire House and Drew Estate goes back over 20 years. Glenn C. Wolfson, CEO of Drew Estate, added, "We are pleased to have played a key role in reaching this historic milestone with Debonaire House...I have no doubt that [Phil] and his team will be very successful in their new business venture."

► Cavalier Genève Opens U.S. Distribution Company

DALLAS—Cavalier Premium Cigars Ltd of Vandoeuvres, Switzerland, has opened a new U.S.-based division, Cavalier Premium Cigars USA LLC, that will serve as the U.S. distributor of its products.

Cavalier Genève produces several lines at San Judas Tadeo in Honduras, each bearing a 24-karat gold diamond on the cigar's wrapper just below the ring. Its flagship White Series cigars are very aromatic and stay mild to medium in strength, offered in seven sizes. Its Black Series is exclusive to the U.S. market, bearing a rich, complex and spicy flavor profile and solid medium body strength and is available in three regular production sizes, as well as a fourth size available only as a gift. Black II is the newest addition to the Cavalier Genève family, a soft box-pressed series that has a rich, complex, yet smooth flavor profile and a strength that builds up to a solid

medium-to-full. The line has been released in five sizes. In addition, the company release a Limited Edition 2018 box-pressed size earlier this year, limited to 500 boxes globally.

Last year, Cavalier Cigars purchased family-owned Tabak Rhein, the oldest operating cigar store in Geneva, Switzerland. The company was founded in 1905 by Ukrainian immigrant Salomon Rhein. The shop, now called Rhein 1905, was remodeled and merged with the former Cavalier of Geneva flagship store.

The company's former U.S. distributor, the boutique cigar maker Cigar Art of Dallas, Texas, will move distribution of its own brands, Singer & Monk and La Bella Otero, to the new company.

Cavalier Premium Cigars USA LLC is located at 400 N. St Paul #210, Dallas, Texas 76201, and can be contacted at Tel: (214) 842-0616, Web: cavalier-cigars.com.

► Plasencia Cigars Taps STG Group for Canadian Distribution

MIAMI—Plasencia Cigars has expanded its distribution to Canada through a new partnership with the Scandinavian Tobacco Group Canada. Effective Aug. 27th, STG Canada became the administrator of distribution, sales, and promotion of all Plasencia Cigars products in stores across Canada.

"We're very excited to build on our company's success by going into this market with STG Canada, a distinguished leader in the industry," said Nestor Andrés Plasencia, c.e.o. of Plasencia Cigars.

Under the new partnership, a range of Plasencia Cigar products including Plasencia Cosecha 146, Reserva 1898, Reserva Original, Alma Fuerte, and Alma Del Campo will be distributed to over 500 Canadian stores.

"We have been fans of Plasencia Cigars for years," said Sylvain Laporte, president of STG Canada. "We couldn't be happier to welcome the Plasencia family into our own, and I'm sure Canadians will appreciate the diversity and high quality of these new cigars."

STG administers over 200 brands in more than 100 markets around the world. Plasencia Cigars is one of the world's largest, tobacco growers and cigar manufacturers.



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► BriarWorks International Dedicates New Factory, Retail Shop & Lounge

COLUMBIA, TENN.—Following the move of its factory and headquarters from Nashville, Tenn. into a larger renovated facility located in the historic tobacco farming town of Columbia, Tenn. in early April, pipe manufacturer BriarWorks International celebrated the official grand opening of its new retail store and lounge in September. The storefront ■ located in the same building as the BriarWorks headquarters and factory and features ■ variety of pipes, pipe tobacco, and cigars.

The grand opening event, which was held on September 1, 2018, included giveaways, a food truck, and a pipe tobacco blending demonstration from Cornell & Diehl head blender Jeremy Reeves.

The full service pipe and cigar lounge features ■ variety of bulk and tinned pipe tobacco, walk-in cigar humidor, BriarWorks pipes, and a multi-tap craft beer bar. The lounge offers ■ casual atmosphere with access to the factory "for those interested in the processes that go into crafting BriarWorks pipes." A ribbon cutting ceremony including local government officials was held on Sept. 14 to dedicate the entire facility and welcome the new business.



► A ribbon cutting for Briarworks International's factory, lounge and retail shop was held on Sept. 14, 2018, with numerous local officials from the city of Columbia and Maury County, Tenn.

Laudisi Enterprises Launches Ireland Branch, Acquires Peterson Pipes

LONGS, S.C.—U.S.-based retailer, distributor, and manufacturer of premium pipes and pipe tobacco, Laudisi Enterprises, Inc., has purchased Ireland's Kapp & Peterson, specifically the Peterson pipe factory and the Peterson of Dublin shop on Nassau Street. In a separate transaction, Kapp & Peterson's pipe tobacco brand and related assets were sold to Scandinavian Tobacco Group A/S.

Founded in 1865, Peterson is one of the world's oldest continuously operating pipe factories. "Peterson is among the most venerable of pipe institutions," noted Sykes Wilford, president and CEO of Laudisi. "While it has changed ownership a number of times during its storied 150-year history, each owner has served as a steward for the factory and the brand," Wilford continued.

For the past thirty years, Peterson has been owned by Tom Palmer, managing director of the Dublin-based pipe factory. Under Palmer's leadership, Peterson has become a global pipe brand with distribution networks in Europe, Asia, and the Americas while remaining true to its founding principles and aesthetics.

"Laudisi's enthusiasm for and knowledge of pipes will combine perfectly with Peterson's manufacturing expertise and passion to enhance the brand in the years to come," said Palmer. Laudisi's retail website, Smokingpipes.com, has a long history of collaboration with the Irish firm and has played a

key role in marketing Peterson pipes to collectors around the world. Said Wilford, "It is a logical step for us to continue in that role, but in an ownership and management capacity."

Added, Palmer "Peterson benefits from Laudisi's wider pipe market experience, plus its technology and marketing expertise... Laudisi deeply understands and appreciates the spirit and culture of Peterson as well as its importance to pipe smokers and collectors. Peterson is in good hands."

The Peterson factory will remain in operation at its present location on Pearse Street in Sallynoggin. The Peterson of Dublin store will likewise remain on Nassau Street. The Kapp & Peterson craftsmen and administrative staff will continue in their present roles. Damien Maguire, financial director for Peterson, succeeds Tom Palmer as managing director. Joshua Burgess oversees all of Laudisi's European interests.

Laudisi's Smokingpipes Europe team, which was just established in Dublin in June 2018, has relocated to Peterson's facility in Sallynoggin. The new retail division was established to bring Laudisi's favorite pipes (new and estate), as well as a range of pipe smoking accessories, to a European audience. "When we started receiving inquiries from European customers about the possibility of a Smokingpipes website in their own languages, with quicker European shipping, we took notice, and for the past two years have been working to establish a European branch," said Wilford.

Laudisi launched a unique, multilingual retail website at Smokingpipes.eu in June, which includes with all the innovative features that were developed for Smokingpipes.com.

Villiger Cigars Enters West Coast Distribution Deal with JMG Intl.

MIAMI—Villiger Cigars has announced a new distribution agreement with San Jose, California-based JMG International Inc., continues its growth path in the U.S. marketplace with a new and very strong west coast distribution channel.

JMG began distribution of Villiger's premium handmade and machine made cigars in California, Washington, and Oregon on September 10, 2018. The company maintains deep rooted relationships with over 1,000 retail shops throughout the region. Valuing the investment its customers have invested in their brick and mortar businesses and, JMG has never developed an internet presence nor sold its products via a mail order catalog directly to consumers. Rene Castañeda, president of Villiger Cigars North America, said, "JMG International, over the span of 22 years, has become one of the most respected and well-known distributors of premium cigars on the west coast. We look forward to a fruitful partnership that will help spread the Villiger lifestyle to a larger audience."

President of JMG, Charles J. Janigian stated: "Like a fine cigar, JMG believes in solid slow growth with manufacturers who value old world traditions. Villiger Cigars which was established in 1888 certainly fits our values. In saying that, we feel it an honor and privilege, to have been selected as Villiger's west coast distributor and look forward to working with Rene Castañeda and the Villiger team."

In Memoriam

Cano Ozgener, 81

Cano Aret Ozgener, an electrical engineer who founded CAO Cigars International, passed away on June 9 following a long illness.

The prominent Nashville businessman, philanthropist, and artist was a Turkish Armenian born in Istanbul who immigrated to the United States in 1962 to earn a master's in electrical engineering at Columbia University. During his career at DuPont's research and development operations, he tinkered on the side with engineering improvements to meerschaum pipe designs and began importing pipes. In 1977, he left DuPont to dedicate his time to his meerschaum business, expanding into domestically-made humidors in the early 1990s. The first CAO-branded cigar debuted in 1995 and grew to international prominence, with distribution reaching over 100 countries before the company was sold in 2007 to ST Group. In 2012, Ozgener and his son Tim converted the former CAO building into Oz Arts Nashville, a nonprofit contemporary performing arts center. Ozgener himself was also an artist who took up painting at the age of 70, producing over 500 paintings and dozens of sculptures before his passing.



Personnel Moves

> **Fratello Cigars** has hired **Shannon Strang** as the company's new director of operations. The Pittsburgh native comes to Fratello with a "wealth of experience in accounting, business development, logistics and customer service," says company founder Omar de Frias, adding, "Together, we plan to bring our customer service strategy and operational capabilities to new heights."



Strang

> **David Blanco** has been named president and c.e.o. of **Blanco Cigar Company**, effective September 1st, 2018. The position had previously been held by Blanco's father, Cesar, since the company's founding, handling administrative business affairs behind the scenes. David, his father, and David's uncle Francisco founded the business as Los Blancos Cigar Company in 1998. Francisco, a 20-year disabled Vietnam veteran, left the company for health reasons early on, leaving Cesar and David to continue the family effort. Cesar, himself a 27-year combat veteran. David, a 29-year combat veteran who is still an active Army Reservist, has served as executive vice president since the founding of the company, responsible cigar blending, product development and design, marketing, advertising, and sales. Blanco Cigars also blends, imports, and exports cigars for 12 different companies, domestic and internationally.



Blanco

> **Heather Callahan**, c.e.o. of **Team Callahan Cigar Brokerage** company, has been selected by **Marrero Cigar Co.** and **Fabrica MCR Tamboril D.R.** to represent the company's cigar brands. "I have known Heather many years and we have talked about working together and now the timing is right," said Joel Vazquez Marrero, owner of Marrero Cigar Co. "Given Heather's decade of experience, knowledge, passion, and long-standing relationships with her customers and our highly rated Costa Rican cigars blends and Dominican Artistic blends created by Felix Gonzalez, we are confident this will be a joint venture that will allow us to continue our upward momentum."

> **British American Tobacco p.l.c.** announced that **Jack Bowles**, who has served as c.o.o. of BAT's international business since 2017, will succeed **Nicandro Durante** as c.e.o. following Nicandro's retirement on April 1, 2019. In anticipation of this appointment, Bowles will become chief executive designate on November 1, 2018 and will join the Board of Directors January 1, 2019. Bowles joined BAT in 2004 as c.e.o. of BAT France, then became managing director of the BAT subsidiary in Malaysia. He was appointed to the management board in 2009 as regional director for western Europe, then as regional director in both the Americas Region and the Asia-Pacific Region.

Ezra Zion Cigar Company Acquires Fred Rewey's Nomad Cigar Co.

ALVORD, TEXAS—Fred Rewey, founder and owner of Orlando-based Nomad Cigar Company, has sold the company he founded in 2012 to Ezra Zion Cigar Company of Alvord, Texas. Rewey, a cigar enthusiast with an extensive marketing background, created Nomad as "a labor of love and passion for cigars." While Rewey says Nomad grew to ■ level beyond his expectations, operational responsibilities hindered his ability to focus exclusively on marketing, first-hand interaction with consumers, and blending cigars—the areas he loved and never wanted to see compromised in the future.

Chris Kelly, co-owner of Ezra Zion along with Kyle Hoover, stated that "Fred has been a close friend and colleague for years. We're honored to be entrusted with such an institution," noting that Nomad is an artisan boutique brand with an emphasis on quality and craftsmanship.

Nomad Cigars will be distributed nationally by TX Distribution, which is owned by Ezra Zion and operates from their warehouse in Alvord, Texas.

"I feel confident that not only will Chris and Kyle take Nomad Cigar Company to the next level, but will also preserve what has brought it to this point," noted Rewey.

Nomad blends currently in the market will continue to be available to retail brick and mortar shops. Hoover anticipates releasing some limited offerings under the Nomad brand.

In Memoriam

Bill Finck Sr., 87

Henry William "Bill" Finck Sr., former president of the family-owned Finck Cigar Company of San Antonio, Texas, passed away at home on July 10, 2018.

A highly driven San Antonio native with a Juris Doctorate and a passion for adventure and the outdoors, Finck first worked on a ranch in Fowlerton, Texas after graduating, then later journeyed through Mexico, Central America and across the Panama Canal to start a hog farm in Maracaibo, Venezuela with a friend. There, he met his future wife, Hilda. They returned to San Antonio, were married, and Finck later assumed oversight of the Finck Cigar Company when his father, Edward, fell ill. Finck, who specialized in law surrounding water rights, set up a law practice in the San Antonio cigar factory.

Finck was active for decades as an attorney and lobbyist, earning a reputation as feisty politician. Elected three times as state representative in the late 1960s, he achieved distinction as being among Texas' most powerful politicians while chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. In the halls of the legislature, Finck was fond of carrying a box of Travis Club Senators under his arm and passing them out.



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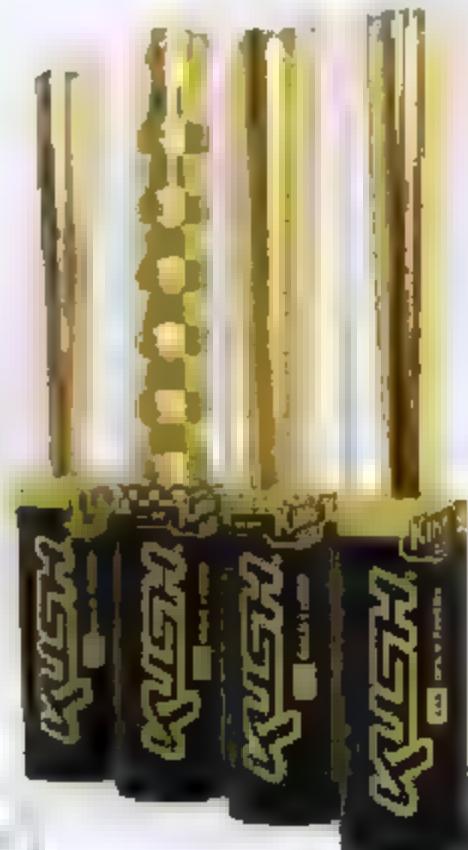


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NOVEMBER 1–3, 2018

CAA Annual Meeting

The Breakers, Palm Beach, Fla. Annual meeting of members of the Cigar Association of America, the national trade organization of cigar manufacturers, importers, distributors, and major suppliers to the industry. Contact: CAA, Washington, D.C., Tel: (202) 223-8204, Web: cigarassociation.org.

NOVEMBER 10–11, 2018

10th Annual West Coast Pipe Show

Palace Station Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nev. Hosted by Steve O'Neill and Marty Pulvers. Smoking friendly exhibit hall with adjacent lounge with full bar. For table reservations and information, contact: Steve O'Neill, Email: steve@westcoastpipeshow.com, Web: westcoastpipeshow.com.

DECEMBER 3–4, 2018

SFATA Annual Conference and Member Meeting

Hilton Austin Airport, Austin, Texas. "Save the Vape" conferences include presentations by industry experts, updates on legislative advocacy efforts, and the members-only annual general meeting. Contact: Smoke-Free Alternatives Trade Association, Washington, D.C., Web: www.sfata.org.

FEBRUARY 11–13, 2019

TPE 2019 (Tobacco Plus Expo International)

Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev. Tobacco, vape, alternative, and general merchandise show; industry tracks including conferences and round tables. Contact: Trade Show Logic, (attendees) Caroline O'Carroll, Tel: (617) 680-2554, Email: cocarroll@tradeshowlogic.com, (exhibitors) Hilary Manning, (805) 744-4216, Email: hilarymanning@tobaccoplusexpo.com, Web: tobaccoplusexpo.com.

FEBRUARY 16, 2019

31st Annual St. Louis Pipe Show

The Webster Groves Masonic Hall, Webster Groves, Mo.; show hotel Best Western, Kirkwood, Mo. A cocktail and refreshment welcome reception with pre-sales will be held the evening before. Contact: Show Coordinator, pipeshow2019@gmail.com.

FEBRUARY 17–22, 2019

12th Annual ProCigar Festival

La Romana and Santiago de los Caballeros, Dominican Republic. Premium cigar festival featuring cigar factory and tobacco farm tours, seminars and tastings, excursions, dinner parties, golf tournament, poker tournament, and charity auction. Contact: ProCigar, Web: procigar.org.

MARCH 17–21, 2019

TAA 51st Annual Convention

Casa de Campo, La Romana, Dominican Republic. Contact: Tobacconists' Association of America, Tel: (770) 597-6264, Email: info@thetaa.org, Web: thetaa.org.

MAY 4–5, 2019

Chicagoland Tobacciana Show

Pheasant Run Resort, St. Charles, Ill. Pipe and tobacco marketplace, seminars, silent auction. Pre-show opens May 4; 6,000 sq ft smoking tent opens May 2. Contact: Craig Cobine, Chicagoland Pipe Collectors Club, porshcigar@aol.com, Tel: (630) 236-6202, Web: chicagopipeshow.com.

JUNE 29–JULY 2, 2019

IPCPR 87th Annual Convention and International Trade Show

Sands Expo and Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact: International Premium Cigar & Pipe Retailers Association, Washington, D.C., Tel: (202) 621-8064 Email: info@ipcpr.org, Web: ipcpr.org.

SEPTEMBER 20–22, 2019

InterTabac/InterSupply 2019

Messe Westfalenhallen Exhibition Centre, Dortmund, Germany. Web: intertabac.de.

OCTOBER 1–4, 2019

NACS Show 2019

Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta, Ga. Convenience and fuel retailing's premier industry even. Contact: NACS, Alexandria, Va., Web: nacsonline.com.

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Davidoff of Geneva's New York City Expansion: Brooklyn or Bust

With three locations to date in Manhattan, Davidoff has looked to Brooklyn's evolving Williamsburg neighborhood as a logical location for its latest New York City retail partnership. > STAFF REPORT

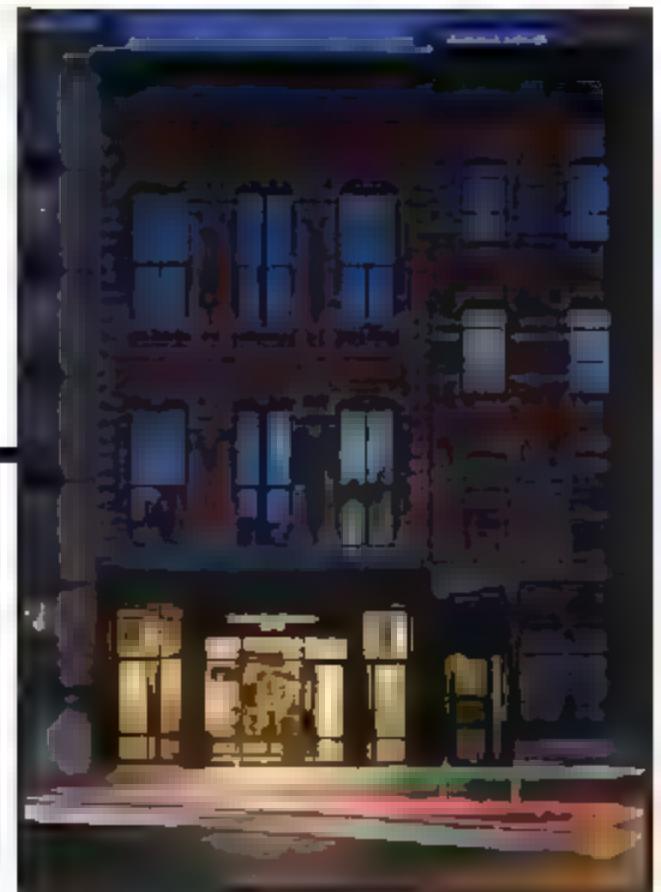
Over the last decade, the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, N.Y., has evolved into a fashionable, culturally vibrant neighborhood, complete with throbbing streets filled with creative New York City restaurants, eclectic shops, and art galleries—all drawing crowds in droves.

In targeting this increasingly appealing New York City market for its newest Davidoff of Geneva Since 1911 location, the Switzerland-based luxury cigar maker partnered with an established retailer that already knew the pulse on the local luxury market: Boris Grossman, owner of Matador Cigars, which has three retail store and lounge locations in Long Is-

land—Roslyn Heights, Massapequa Park, and Hauppauge. The shops already feature one of the finest cigar selections on the island, including those accessed as a Davidoff of Geneva Appointed Merchant.

It's Davidoff's first New York City shop outside the borough of Manhattan, where it already operates three locations, earning the company the deepest presence in the city.

While Williamsburg may be cutting edge, Davidoff of Geneva Since 1911 Boutique by Matador is strategically located just a few steps from one of the neighborhood's oldest, most established dining icons—Peter Luger Steak House, which opened in 1887—clearly building



upon the synergy of attracting the "after-steak" cigar enthusiasts that travel from afar for the generous portions of Luger's famous dry-aged beef.

In fact, after the new Brooklyn boutique marked its soft opening in April 2018, it held two evenings of grand open-

ing celebrations a month later, which included dinner at Peter Luger and several Davidoff cigars in one event ticket price.

The Davidoff of Geneva Brooklyn Boutique occupies over 2,000 square feet of ground-floor space. It features areas for cigar accessories as well as a large, well-stocked walk-in humidor highlighted by hanging tobacco leaf installation in its center. The humidor leads guests into a spacious, elegant lounge furnished with 90 private lockers, multiple TVs for entertainment, and 30 comfortable lounge seats. The lounge caters equally well to both large and small groups.

Richard Krutick, vice president of marketing and retail at Davidoff, says Grossman was an ideal partner for the project in this market. "He has been an outstanding supporter of Davidoff for many years and has expertise in providing a premium environment and consumer experience," said Krutick. "We are also excited about expanding into Brooklyn, with the new store next to the famous Peter Luger's Steakhouse, further cementing Davidoff's and Grossman's commitment to New York City."

The Brooklyn location is the latest

addition to the Davidoff of Geneva since 1911 portfolio of five company-owned properties in the U.S., including the three in Manhattan, and one each in Atlanta and Houston. There are also licensed boutiques in Las Vegas and Tampa.

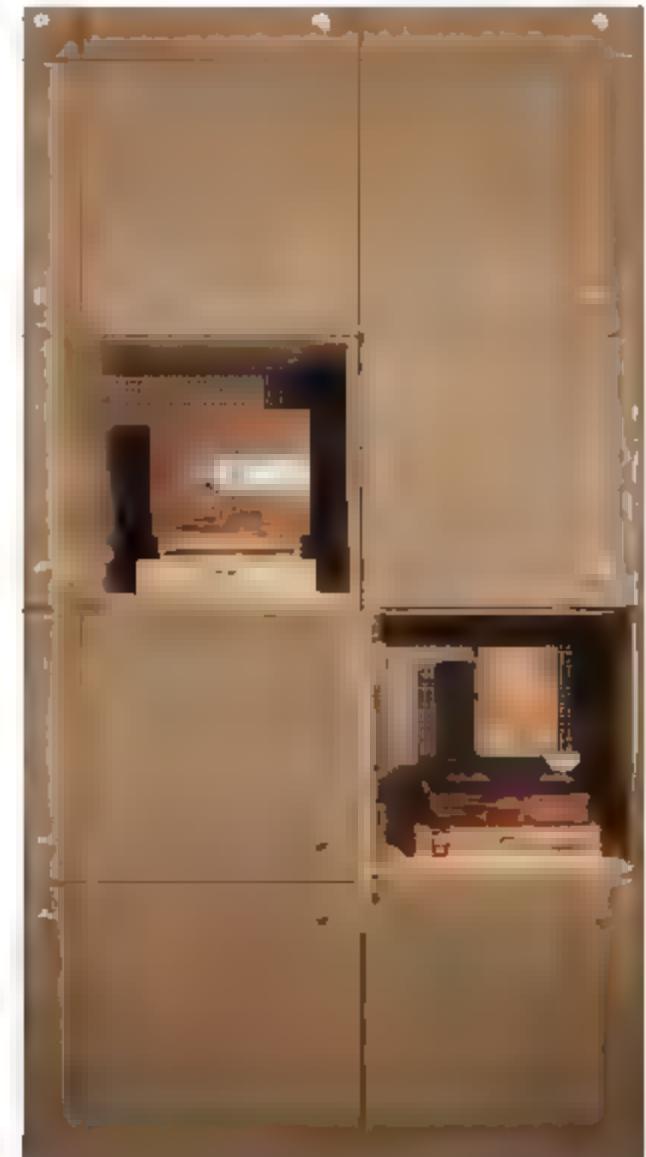
Grossman has long set his sights on high-end venues. "My passion has always been owning and operating an exclusive professional tobacconist store," says Grossman, "a store that offers the best quality products to be had anywhere in the world and combines them with the highest level of service."

In Grossman's estimation, that level of service excellence requires a venue to provide customers with an exclusive location to relax and enjoy their favorite cigar or tobacco in a first-class lounge environment.

"I have been successful in creating this type of atmosphere in my three existing locations on Long Island," Grossman explains. "Matador Cigars is my first love and I will always be driven and humbled by the blessing I have enjoyed with these wonderful products."

The new Brooklyn store is one of several recent examples of Oettinger Da-

vidoff AG's long-term investment in retail and in its partners, joining Davidoff walk-in humidors at Paris Charles de Gaulle airport, Shanghai Hongqiao, and Shanghai Pudong airports as well as Zurich airport which all opened in 2017. More humidors are also to follow at the airports in Moscow, Geneva, and Istanbul. Davidoff notes that the purchasing behavior of aficionados is constantly changing. Worldwide, customers are increasingly demanding unique brand and shopping experiences, at all times and regardless of location. "As the innovation leader in the premium cigars sector, we strive not only to guarantee quality, but also to delight customers with new taste experiences and tobacco blends from all corners of the globe," explains Oettinger Davidoff AG c.e.o. Beat Hauenstein, who joined the company in 2017. "This also includes confronting the changing market environment in good time. Through optimization of the processes, we want to support our markets more efficiently, further build on our global position in the premium cigars sector and successfully guide our company into the future."





Dr. Alejandro Martinez Cuenca, owner and chairman, and son Juan Martinez, executive president, with key company employees at the Joya de Nicaragua factory in Esteli, Nicaragua

Monumental Milestones: Joya at 50

As Nicaragua's first cigar factory, the history of Joya de Nicaragua parallels the birth and growth of Nicaragua's flourishing cigar industry, a journey largely against the odds of adversity. ➤ STAFF REPORT

In an industry that loves to celebrate anniversaries, legacy brands tend to earn the spotlight, some dating back over a century. It's much rarer, though, for a company itself to hit the half-century mark—especially in Central America where cigar making is a much newer endeavor than in well-established origins. Add in the tremendous impact of the country's civil war in the late 1980s and the U.S. economic embargo which closed off the company's largest market, and it's no understatement to say Joya de Nicaragua's resurgence today, much less survival at all, defied the odds.

In Esteli, Nicaragua 50 years ago, Joya de Nicaragua literally pioneered the Nicaraguan cigar industry. In 1968, it became the first tobacco factory to craft premium

handmade cigars in the Central American nation. Since its inception, Joya has been committed to achieving the highest levels of excellence, and establishing itself as the standard for Nicaraguan cigar quality. The company is widely regarded as the patriarch crafter of robust, unique puro blends of locally grown black tobaccos, but has greatly diversified its portfolio.

As for the company's survival, its employees can take well-deserved credit for that, as it was the sheer will of the owner-employees during and following the country's civil war that kept Joya de Nicaragua afloat. It's been said that Joya de Nicaragua isn't just a cigar company; it is lifeline, it is struggle, it is will to forge ahead and renew—a mirror of Esteli and Nicaragua itself.

In its 50 year history, Joya de Nicaragua has evolved to become Nicaragua's most international brand, with presence in over 50 markets, and counting. This success is unprecedented and attributed to its skillful and resilient people.

The history of Joya de Nicaragua is intertwined with the history of Nicaragua itself. From being the official cigar of the White House, and at one point being partly owned by dictator Anastasio Somoza, to having the factory bombed and burned down during the revolution only to be reconstructed by the workers later, Joya de Nicaragua's history is rich and complex, a one of perseverance and resilience.

"At the end of the day, Joya de Nicaragua is a brand that sells cigars," said Dr. Alejandro Martinez Cuenca, chairman of Joya de Nicaragua and owner of the company since 1994. "But what matters to me is that this brand has been the force through which the people of the factory have helped shape the history of Nicaragua itself."

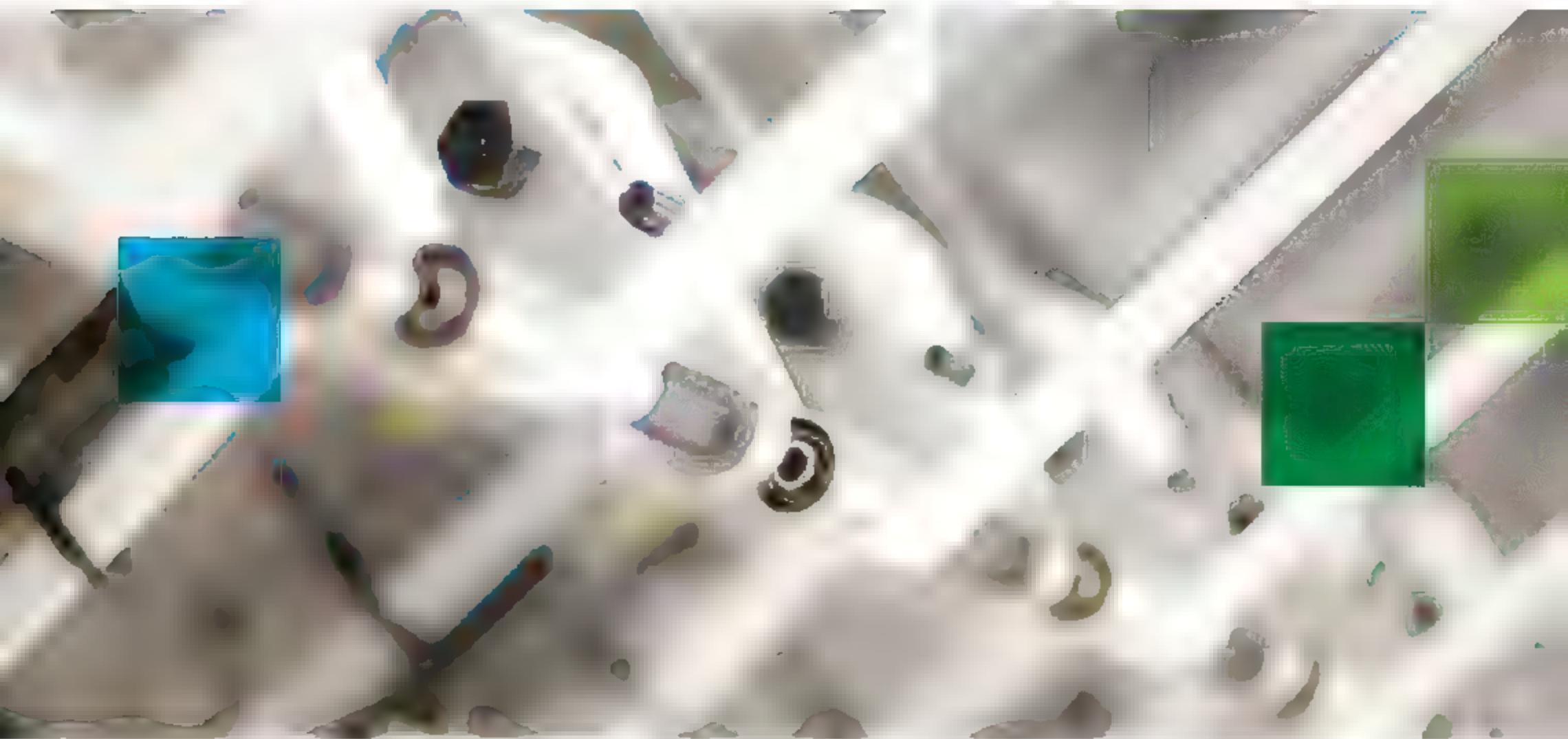
Joya starts its next half a century with a diverse, yet solidified portfolio accompanied by a packaging update for most of its brands. While in 1968 Joya de Nicaragua was the first and only brand of the factory, Joya's offerings have dramatically evolved. Its portfolio now includes the Joya line, Antaño family, Cuatro Cinco, and more, representing a wide variety of brands and blends for all type of smokers and at different price points.

"We don't just want to celebrate our 50th anniversary, but rather put all our



Where it all began: Joya de Nicaragua Clásico is back in the U.S. market, with revamped packaging, exclusively available through Casa de Montecristo and JR Cigars.

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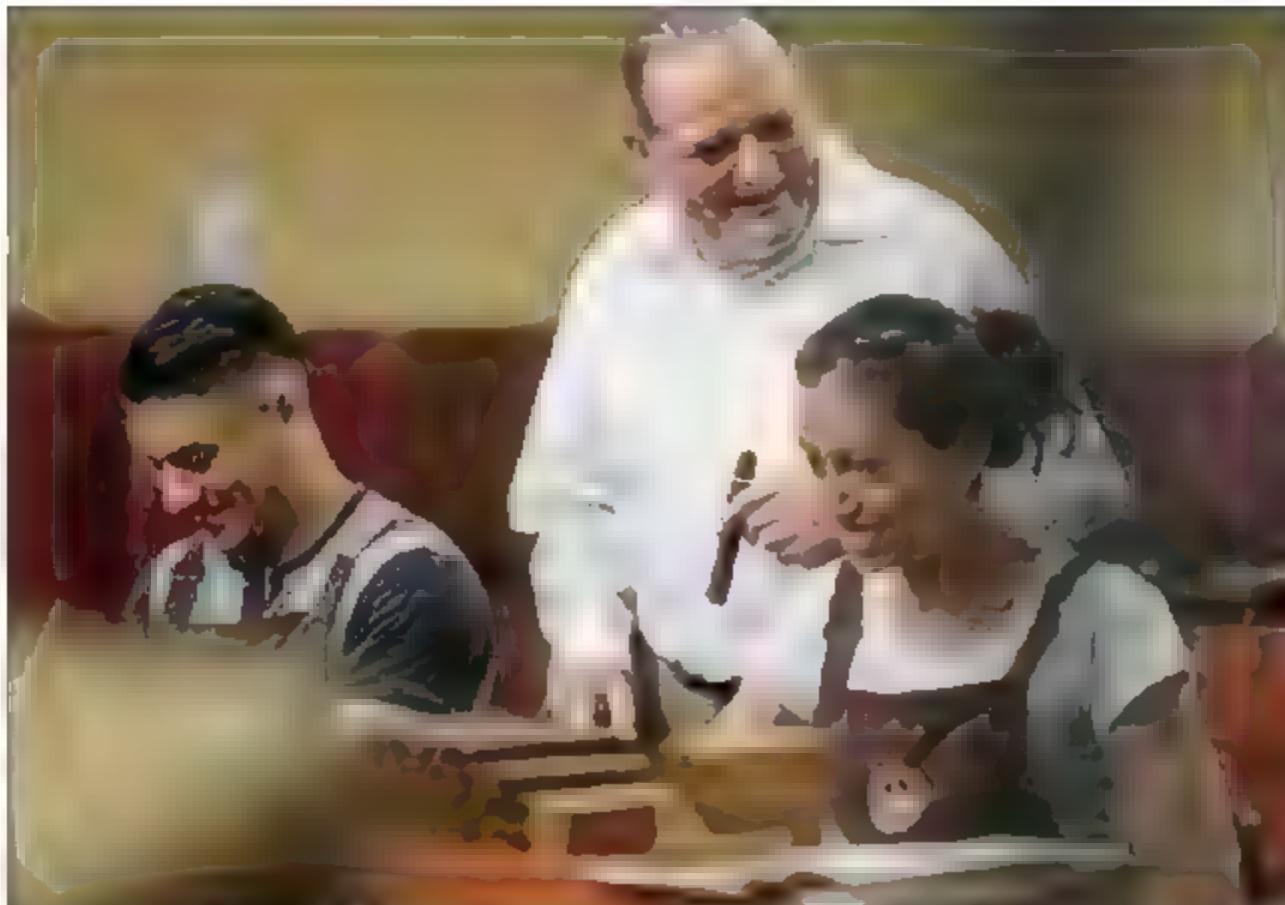
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Dr. Alejandro Martinez Cuenca, chairman

and son Juan Martinez, executive president



inside the Joya factory in Esteli, Nicaragua.

acquired life experience and cigar knowledge to set the groundwork for the next 50 years to come," Cuenca continued.

Indeed, Joya de Nicaragua has been celebrating its anniversary all throughout 2018 by sharing the history, secrets, and anecdotes that have shaped the brand and its products. Events have been held all over the world and audiences have had the chance to participate in special giveaways. Not surprisingly, the company also set out early to develop an exclusive 50th anniversary cigar to celebrate the achievement, resulting in the release of Cinco Decadas this summer. It's made from an exclusive selection of all-Nicaraguan tobaccos, coaxed by 50 years of accumulated knowledge, experience, and resilience.

"It is our most memorable milestone yet, and the most memorable of celebra-

Cinco Décadas (five decades), honors Joya de Nicaragua's 50th anniversary. In the two original shapes first rolled by the factory when it opened in 1968.



tions always require that you rise to the occasion. That's what Cinco Decadas represents," said Cuenca. "We want consumers to know that in Cinco Decadas, they will find a cigar so premium that the fact that there's one in the humidor, will be enough to celebrate."

The special release is made exclusively with prime extra-vintage leaves, "immaculately balanced," and accompanied by sweet and spicy notes—a silky smooth smoke that delivers a rich and fulfilling experience, explains Cuenca.

"Cinco Decadas is a Nicaraguan cigar of unparalleled elegance," Cuenca gushes. "This cigar is intended to celebrate a special moment in our company's history and offer an opportunity to pause, reflect, give thanks—and look to the future."

At this time, the cigar is available only two vitolas, meant as a tribute to the very first formats ever rolled at the Joya de Nicaragua production floor back in 1968: Diadema (6 x 54), retailing for \$19.99, and El General (7 x 50), retailing for \$18.99. The cigars are presented in a finely crafted ivory-white and gold-lacquered box of 10, featuring gold embossed leaves and a special 50th Anniversary security seal that guarantees its origin from the Joya de Nicaragua factory. Cinco Decadas has a limited but on-going production of 5,000 boxes in the first year, and is available only in selected markets worldwide, with 3,000 boxes allocated for the U.S.

Another project corresponding to this year's anniversary was the release of the book "Cinco Décadas: The Rise of the Nicaraguan Cigar," backed by more than two years of research by British journalist Nick Hammond and beautiful photographs and designs from several top Nicaraguan talents. The 204-page book journeys through Nicaragua, the city of Esteli, the post-colonial era, the social struggles of the 1900's, up until the evolution of the Joya brand today. It also touches on the exceptional aspects of the cigar-making process and the social impact of the industry. It closes with a depiction of how Joya de Nicaragua has evolved to become one of the world's most renowned premium cigar brands.

The book also documents how Joya de Nicaragua's longtime employees are not mere collaborators, but rather are "the force that has driven Joya de Nicaragua and at times literally kept it on its feet." That is the case of Alberto Martinez, head of the factory's production floor, who in the book recalled his own journey, from his start at Joya de Nicaragua, to his key role in the survival of the factory, and the pleasure of contributing to company's resurgence in recent years.

Hammond writes that Alberto was a long-haired, denim-jacketed 13-year-old when he literally knocked on the factory door and asked for work. At the time, Cubans effectively ran the facto-

ry on behalf of General Somoza, yet despite his appearance, Alberto somehow convinced them to give him a job. "I went straight into bonchero training," he recalls, and to this day believes that the lady who interviewed him had mistakenly thought his name was Cuban.

But Alberto was fortunate to learn everything about the factory's operations, not just bunching. Like many of his peers, he became a revolutionary during the war and could have continued as a soldier, but yearned to return to the cigar factory, even as it struggled to survive.

Alberto recalls the desperate trips to Managua that the senior factory workers made as they tried to persuade Dr. Cuenca—an economist and academic who dabbled in politics—to buy the company in the early 1990s. The effort wasn't immediately fruitful, "But we kept going back, week after week," Alberto recalls.

Cuenca ultimately agreed to buy the factory with the help of investors, and as part of the deal, he promised that no one would be unnecessarily fired for five years. For their part, the workers pledged to use their skills to the best of their ability for the same period of time.

That included Leonel "Don Leo" Raudez, general manager at the Joya de Nicaragua factory, who is something of a legend in the Nicaraguan tobacco industry. He's been working with the leaf since the early 1970s and arrived at Joya de Nicaragua just in time to help lay down foundations for the chaotic years of the cigar boom. But soon after Cuenca bought the factory, Raudez struggled with the pressure and missed a lot of work. Summoned to Managua to see Cuenca, Raudez assumed his time was up. But to his surprise, Cuenca extended even more trust in him, telling him they were on a journey, and Cuenca couldn't do it without Raudez. It was a life-changing moment for Raudez, who immediately doubled-down and assured his position as a crucial member of the team, and today is a teetotaler, yoga-practicing vegan.

Today, Joya de Nicaragua is not only the producer of the powerful *puro* blends of locally grown black tobaccos that it pioneered, also a growing range of multi-nation blends and strengths that have extended its reach to a wider range of cigar enthusiasts.

"At the end of the day, Joya de Nicaragua is a brand that sells cigars," says Dr. Cuenca, "But what matters to me is that this brand has been the force through which the people of the factory have helped shape the history of Nicaragua itself." ■



This undated photo of the rolling gallery is the earliest known photo of the Joya de Nicaragua factory.

Premium Cigar Imports Up Again, by 2.4% in 2017

Showing negligible growth last year, premium cigar imports continue to reach ever-higher post-boom heights. >**E. EDWARD HOYT III**

Premium, hand-made cigars imported into the United States posted their third straight year of gains in 2017, up 2.4 percent to 330.1 million sticks, a gain of 7.8 million cigars over 2016, representing the most cigars since 1998 when 334.6 million were imported. The total also represented a 33 percent overall increase over 1999, when premium imports bottomed out at 248.3 million, followed by an overall 18-year rise, according to annual statistics released by the Washington-based trade association the Cigar Association of America (CAA).

The trade group tracks U.S. Bureau of the Census import data from eight key supplier countries that ship large cigars into the U.S. (Bahamas, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and the Philippines), categorizing those that have an import value of 76 cents or greater per stick as premium cigars. Based on import information voluntarily reported by its manufacturer members, the CAA then subtracts reported totals of machine-made cigar imports from a second category of large cigar imports—those having an import value between 23 and 76 cents which are a mixture of premium

machine-made (popular-price) cigars—to arrive at its premium hand-made import estimates. The statistical correction applies primarily to the Dominican Republic, which has a significant machine-made cigar industry while Nicaragua has traditionally had none, and Honduras a relatively modest output in that segment.

The top three supplier countries of premium cigars to the U.S.—Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Honduras—accounted for 99.5 percent of premium cigar imports, the same as 2016. In 1996, those three origins accounted for only 86 percent of premium cigars imported into the U.S. amid a much more diverse range of supplier nations, with the remaining 14 percent that year dominated primarily by Jamaica and Mexico.

Nicaragua held the dominant position for a second consecutive year, with 148.3 million of its premium cigars imported into the U.S. in 2017, up 10.4 percent over the 134.4 million sticks imported in 2016. The Dominican Republic, which ranked second last year, saw an estimated 118.5 million premium cigars imported into the U.S., up 2.5 percent over 2016's total of 115.6 million. Nicaragua margin over

the Dominican Republic grew last year, at 29.9 million cigars. Honduras saw a significant drop in premium cigars imported into the U.S., at 61.8 million sticks in 2017, a decline of 13.2 percent from 71.3 million sticks in 2016.

Nicaragua's share of premium cigars imported into the U.S. exceeded the Dominican Republic for the first time in 2016, putting the Central American country into the number one position of premium cigar suppliers to the U.S. and knocking the Dominican Republic into the number two position. This crossover followed 13 consecutive years of increasing shipments from Nicaragua to the U.S., reaching 134.4 million in 2016, compared to 115.6 million for the Dominican Republic, a margin of 18.75 million sticks. The Dominican Republic saw imports into the U.S. decline each of the four previous years, down from 134.1 million in 2012.

The Philippine Republic saw its premium imports into the U.S. nearly double, from 449,000 sticks in 2016 to 863,000 sticks in 2017, a jump of 92.2 percent. It remained rank as the number four supplier origin.

Mexico continued its long trending decline as significant player in the U.S. premium market, with 177,000 premium sticks imported into the U.S. in 2017, a decline of 49 percent over the 2016 total of 348,000. At the peak of the boom, it supplied 25.2 million premium cigar to the U.S., a 6 percent share.

Costa Rican premium cigar imports jumped by nearly 53 percent, from 223,000 in 2016 to 340,000 in 2017, while Bahaman premium cigar imports rose

2017 U.S. Premium Cigar Imports (CAA estimates, thousands of cigars)

Rank/Origin*	2017	Share	2016	% Change
1 Nicaragua	148,313	44.9%	134,375	+10.4%
2 Dominican Republic	118,461	35.9%	115,621	+2.5%
3 Honduras	61,771	18.7%	71,270	-13.3%
4 Philippine Republic	863	.3%	449	+92.2%
5 Costa Rica	340	.1%	223	+52.5%
6 Mexico	177	.1%	348	-49.1%
7 Bahamas	25	.01%	19	+31.6%
Grand Total	330,083	100%	322,329	+2.41%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census Report IM 146, Imports of Merchandise for Consumption, based on data from U.S. Customs Service, and derived estimates from Cigar Association of America (CAA). *Key supplier countries tracked by CAA.

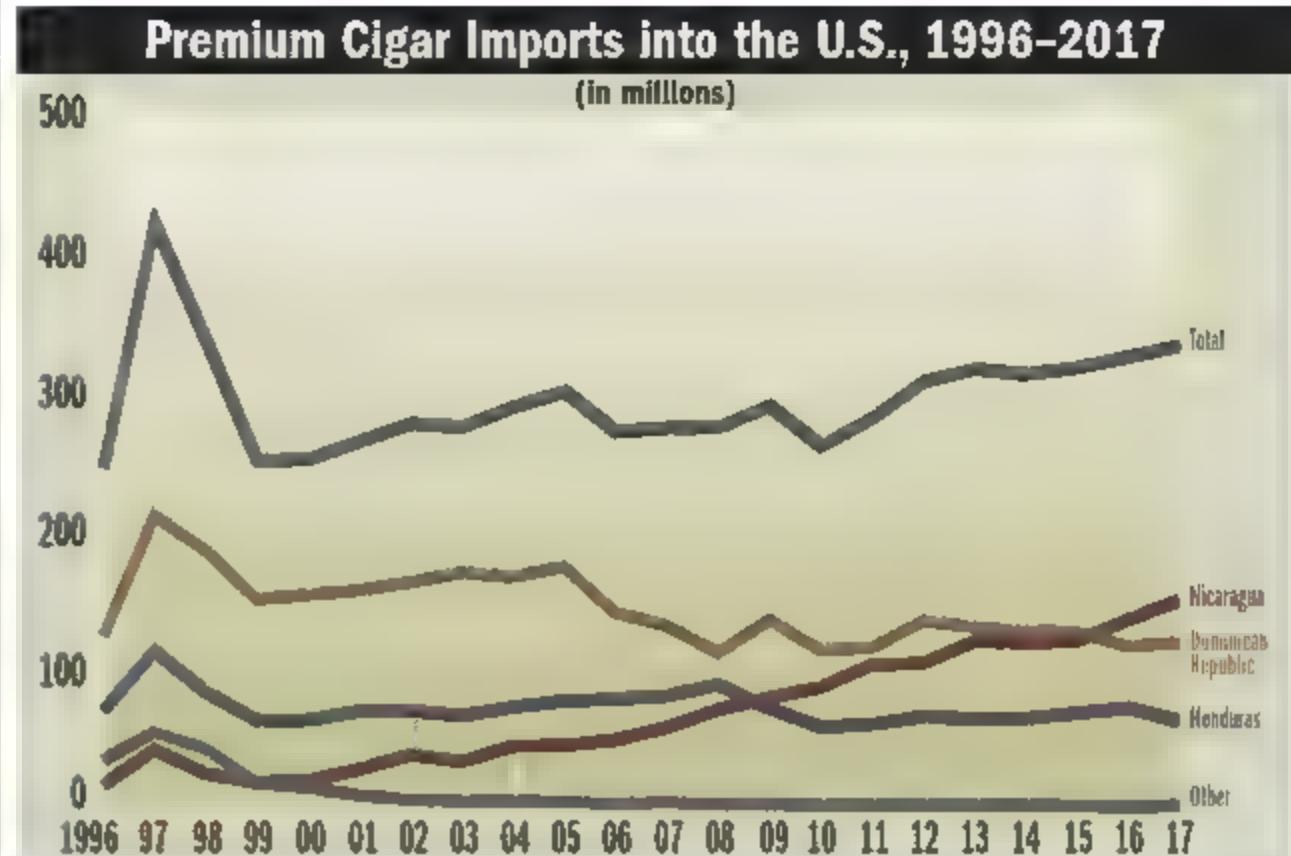


by nearly 32 percent, from 19,000 in 2016 to 25,000 in 2017.

LARGE CIGARS

Total imports of large cigars for consumption in the U.S. reached 7.79 billion sticks in 2017, an increase of 7.1 percent over the 7.27 billion sticks tracked by customs in 2016. Given CAA's estimate that 330.1 million of those large cigars were considered premium, or 4.2 percent, the remaining 7.46 billion, or 95.8 percent, large cigars that entered the U.S. were non-premium.

The Dominican Republic still accounts for the vast majority of non-premium large cigar imports into the U.S. at 6.86 billion sticks or 92.1 percent in 2017, a 9 percent jump over 2016, when 6.29 billion were imported. Indonesia followed with 243.9 million, or 3.3 percent; Honduras with 159.6 million or 2.1 percent; Bangladesh with 151.6 million, or 2.3 percent; and Nicaragua with 92.3 million or 1.2 percent. Collectively, these top five origins account for 96.6 percent of large, non-premium cigar imports into the United States. The



Nicaragua, which moved into the lead position in 2016 as the largest supplier of premium cigars into the U.S. market, widened its gap over the Dominican Republic in 2017.

remaining 3.4 percent was spread among 19 different origin nations.

The total declared customs value of all large cigar imports, premium and

non-premium, at the time of importation was \$958.4 million in 2017, a 7.9 percent increase over 2016's declared value of \$888.3 million.

Nicaraguan Cigars Celebrated at Puro Sabor Festival 2018

Nicaragua's Puro Sabor 2018 Festival, held from January 22–27, attracted a record 200 participants from 29 countries. The festival is organized by the Nicaraguan Chamber of Tobacco Industries (CNT) to celebrate international recognition of the tobacco cultivated and the cigars made in Nicaragua. It is also a chance for the participants to learn more about the festival's host country "be seduced by Nicaragua's natural charms."

For the second consecutive year, the festivities began 25 miles south of the country's capital of Managua in the architecturally stunning city of Granada, renowned for its historic interest and tourist appeal and home of CNT affiliate Mombacho Cigars. The festivities kicked off with a dinner in the Old Convent Cultural Center San Francisco de Granada, where visitors were joined by government authorities, representatives of the Esteli Mayor's office, and other CNT affiliates.

This year, various participants also took the opportunity to enjoy a day in the sun at the Rancho Santana tourist center, a residential community on the Pacific Coast.

A commemorative box of 20 different brands of cigars made in Nicaragua was offered for sale this year, with proceeds directed for a project promoted by the chamber's affiliates to reforest the Rio Esteli watershed.

Festivities moved to Esteli on January 24, where partici-



pants spent the duration of the festival visiting factories and plantations, where visitors were received by company owners who guided them through the entire cigar manufacturing process, learning about the preparation of the tobaccos, and even having a try at rolling tobacco into cigars.

The traditional Fiesta Blanca, held in Esteli's Domingo Gadea Plaza, stood out among the cultural events. There, affiliates and guests paid homage to don Gilberto Oliva and don José Orlando Padrón, two great pioneers of the tobacco sector in Nicaragua who helped develop tobacco cultivation in Esteli through the companies that bear their respective surnames. Both men passed away in December of last year.

Due to the civil and political unrest that broke out in Nicaragua earlier this year, resulting in travel advisories, CNT has announced that Puro Sabor 2019 has been postponed.

2018 IPCPR Convention & Trade Show: More New Merchandise

Part 2 of Smokeshop's coverage of new merchandise showcased at the 2018 IPCPR Trade Show. >E. EDWARD HOYT III

IPCPR 2018 TRADE SHOW NEW MERCHANDISE

Gurkha Cigars, Tamarac, Fla. (gurkhacigars.com) debuted several remastered predicate blends as impressive reintroductions to its portfolio.

While most Gurkha cigars are notable for their spicy and bold flavor, the newly unveiled **Chateau de Prive** has a more traditional mild and creamy profile typical of many of high-end Dominican cigars, but with characteris-

tic Gurkha complexity. The velvety cigar is made with Dominican filler, a Dominican Olor binder, and an Ecuadorian Desflorado wrapper. The initial production is limited to only 300 boxes of each of three sizes—Bishop (5 x 50), \$10 each; Rook (6 x 46), \$10 each; and King of Warriors (6 1/2 x 52), \$11 each. The cigars are available in special limited edition 20 count boxes.

Marquesa was designed to be reminiscent of the flavor and packaging of pre-embargo Cuban cigars. The blend of this "throwback" cigar has a spicy "Cubanesque" flavor, tapping Ometepe and Esteli, Nicaragua fillers, a Nicaraguan binder, and an earthy Sumatra wrapper for a bold, well-balanced medium body and spicy smoke. The cigars are offered in three sizes in 20 count boxes, 10 round and 10 box press: Robusto (5 x 52), \$8 each; Toro (6 x 54), \$9 each; and Belicoso (5 x 54), \$9.

Building on the popularity of

its Ghost series, Gurkha dug deep into their predicate blend book to fine-tune the **Gurkha Gold** blend, which has a bolder nutty and earthy profile compared to the original Ghost's sweet flavor profile, thanks to its Ecuadorian Habano wrapper, U.S., Dominican, and Nicaraguan fillers and an aged Criollo 1998 binder and complete the medium to full-bodied blend, which is initially being offered in three sizes presented 21-count boxes: Shadow (5 x 52), \$8 each; Asura (6 x 54), \$9 each; and Exorcist (6 x 60), \$11 each.

The special edition **Cellar Reserve 10th Anniversary** cigar debuted at the 2017 IPCPR Trade Show to commemo-

rate the 10th anniversary of Gurkha's first brick and mortar cigar, and was available only in a limited edition humidor. Now the company has

decided to continue production to meet ongoing demand, offering in a single Executive Toro (6 x 52) size in 24-count boxes, \$12 per stick. The cigar is medium body, full-flavor, and extremely complex, rolled from aged Dominican filler, a Dominican Olor binder, and a Rosado Habano wrapper.

Gurkha also reintroduced a line of premium flavored cigars that first debuted 12 years ago and feature the



"appealing aroma" of pipe tobacco. The company says it worked with its master blenders to come up with a highly rated blend of spicy, flavorful tobacco from the Dominican Republic with the "perfect hint of sweetness and flavor." There are three varieties: Café Tabac, with hints of coffee; Red Head, featuring hints of cherry; and White Rascal, with hints of vanilla. They will be available both a 5 x 52 size presented in 25-count traditional wooden boxes, \$160 retail, and a 4 x 34 size presented in a handy 5-count travel tin and \$14 retail.

Fratello Cigars, Springfield, Va., (fratelloacigar.com) extended its Navetta line, which debuted at the 2017 trade show and pays homage to with the launch of **Navetta Inverso** (inverted shuttle in Italian). Company founder Omar de Frias, who retired from a 12-year career at NASA in 2016 to focus on his growing Fratello



brand, blended Navetta to "translate the ultimate celebration our men and women of the space program felt after a successful mission," de Frias explained at the time. "After being part of over 21 missions nothing beats the feeling of getting our astronauts home safe to their families. Colleagues of mine would get together and smoke a very special cigar to commemorate the occasion." Navetta Inverso reverses the original Ecuadorian oscuro-wrapped Navetta blend, with its Nicaragua filler and Dominican binder, rebalancing the same tobaccos in different positions and proportions: Dominican and Nicaragua fillers, an Ecuadorian binder, and a Nicaraguan habano wrapper. "It does not cease to amaze me how one leaf of tobacco can change a blend entirely. In our case, we changed it all," said de Frias, who describes the new cigars as rich and full-bodied. Rolled at Joya de Nicaragua like other Fratello



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>MERCHANDISE ROUNDUP

lines, Inverso debuts in three sizes: Corona Gorda (5 7/8 x 46), \$9.50 each; Robusto (5 1/2 x 54), \$11.25; and Toro Grande (6 1/4 x 54), \$12.50, presented in 20-count acquired white boxes. While the Navetta line featured white rings, Navetta Inverso's rings are black.



Fratello has replaced the sliding lid boxes used for its original Fratello line—which is now officially called Fratello Classico—along with its subsequent release, Bianco, with sleek lacquered hinge-lid boxes matching the Oro line, and similar to those in the Navetta lines, with Classico in Red, Bianco in white, and Oro in gold.

Garo Cigars, Glendale, California (garocigars.com), unveiled the new ME740 lancero vitolo in its Maduro Especial line. The 7 x 40 cigar, which retails for \$9.26, is the fourth shape in the series, joining the 5 x 56, 5 x 60 torpedo, and 6 x 52 vitolos, all presented in black lacquered boxes of 27 cigars. Maduro Especial by Garo features an undisclosed filler blend, Indonesian binder, and Ecuadorian maduro wrapper, delivering a “balanced and smooth” smoke with “hints of sweet, black coffee



Garo Cigars founder Garo Bouldoukian (left) and son Harout (right), company president.

layered with flavors of roasted nuts, leather, and a touch of dried red fruits,” while “notes of spice and pepper precede a long, elegant finish.”

Also showcased was the **Garo 20th Anniversary Robusto**, a line extension that was previewed at the 2017 trade show but is now in widespread distribution. Like the other two sizes in this line, this 4 3/4 x 54 cigar features Nicaraguan and Ecuadorian filler, a Dominican Olor binder, and Ecuadorian Corojo wrapper and retails for \$12.50 each in boxes of 20 cigars. Garo Cigar manufactures all of products at its own factory—Tabacalera Cinco Estrellas—located in Tamboril, Dominican Republic.



Fourth Generation Cigar Co., Tampa, Fla. (americanrolled.com), the sister company of J.C. Newman Cigar Co. run by Drew Newman, son of J.C. Newman president Eric Newman, showcased **The American**, an entirely American-made and sourced hand rolled luxury cigar that recently began shipping to select retailers. The American was the first cigar brand rolled in the Newman family's historic El Reloj factory when it opened in 1910 in Ybor City, Fla. by E. Regensburg Sons, which created the brand in 1880 in New York City. Reintroduced by Drew as an American puro, the flavorful, medium-bodied cigar has an entirely unique, distinctive taste dominated by earthy flavors. “From the tobacco to cigar molds to the wood cabinet boxes, everything is proudly grown and made in America,” explains Newman. The filler is Pennsylvania Type 41 grown by Mennonite family farmers in



Lancaster, Pa., and Connecticut Havana grown John Foster in South Windsor, Conn., who also grew the Connecticut Broadleaf binder. The wrapper is Florida Sun Grown farmed by Jeff Borysiewicz in Clermont, Fla. The cigar is hand crafted in four sizes and packed in classic wooden cabinets of ten cigars: No. 1 Churchill (7 x 47), \$19 each; No. 2 Toro (6 1/2 x 54), \$18.50 each; No. 3 Robusto (4 1/2 x 50), \$16 each; and No. 4 Torpedo (6 1/8 x 52), \$21 each.



PDR Cigars, Doral, Fla. (pdrcigars.com), launched the **A. Flores 1975 Gran Reserva Maduro**, the fourth wrapper offering in this series which adds a Mexican San Andrés option to the original Corojo 2006 (Dominican), and subsequent Sungrown (Ecuadorian Habano) and Desflorado (Ecuadorian Connecticut) line extensions. All four blends are offered in five sizes: Robusto (5 x 52), Grand Toro (6 x 54), Torpedo (6 1/2 x 52), Double Magnum (6 x 60), and Half Corona (3 1/2 x 46) in 5-count tins or 50-count boxes. In addition, new packaging has been rolled out for all four blends, including new 24-count boxes and completely redesigned rings.

PDR 1878 Café is a trio of new coffee-flavored line extensions to the PDR 1878 series. Each comes in three sizes (Corona, Robusto, and Toro) presented in 20-count boxes. All three blends use Dominican Criollo '98 both as the binder and in the filler blend, paired with different wrappers and fillers: **Natural Roast** adds Nicaraguan Criollo '98 to the filler and uses an Ecuadorian Connecticut Shade wrapper. **Medium Roast** adds Dominican Corojo in the filler, and uses an Ecuadorian Sun Grown Claro wrapper. **Dark Roast** adds Nicaraguan Criollo '98 in the filler, and uses a Brazilian Maduro wrapper.

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Drew Estate, Miami, Fla. (drewestate.com), announced the re-branding of the Herrera Esteli flagship brand, as well as the national release of two new line extensions blended by Willy Herrera. **The Herrera Esteli Brazilian Stalk-Cut Maduro** features a dense plantation-grown Mata Fina wrapper over a Connecticut River Valley Broadleaf binder with fillers from Nicaragua and is rolled at La Gran Fabrica Drew Estate. Five vitolas are offered, presented in boxes of 25 cigars: Robusto Grande (5 1/4 x 52), \$9.12 each; Toro Especial (6 x 52), \$9.68 each; Lonsdale (6 x 44), \$9.28 each; Fino (6 x 52), \$10.80 each; and Corona Gorda (5 7/8 x 46), \$8.16 each.

The **Herrera Esteli Miami** is crafted by level nine rollers from Cuba at the El Titan de Bronze on Calle Ocho in Little Havana, Miami—Willy Herrera's family factory and the oldest remaining fabrica in Little Havana. The complete Herrera Esteli Miami line is crafted with a lush Ecuadorian Habano Oscuro wrapper over a rich Ecuadorian Sumatran binder with fillers from the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua. The new look of Herrera Esteli Miami features a black and gold color tone and is only available to Drew Diplomat Retailers in five vitolas in boxes of 10 cigars: Robusto Grande (5 x 50), \$109.97 per box; Toro Especial (6 x 52), \$117.47 per box; Lonsdale Deluxe (6 1/2 x 44), \$112.97 per box; Piramide Fino (6 1/2 x 54), \$127.47 per box; and Short Corona Gorda (5 3/4 x 48), \$97.97 per box. In addition, the **Herrera Esteli Habano** and **Herrera Esteli Norteño** have received a new look, each now presented in unified Herrera Esteli branding and packaged in 25 count boxes rather than classic cabinet boxes. Under the re-branding, the company is no longer supporting the 28- and 75-count refillable display trays or the 25 count refill bundles.

The company unveiled its long awaited national release of **Isla del Sol Maduro**, the maduro wrapped blend of Isla del Sol, as well a new Gordito size of Isla del Sol Sun Grown, the original line of Isla del Sol. Isla del Sol Maduro

is blended with a "rare" triple-Nicaraguan-leaf mix, infused with coffee, and wrapped in a maduro leaf that's finished with a sweetened cap, delivering cocoa notes and a mellow room aroma. Four sizes are offered, presented in 10-count boxes: Robusto (5 x 52), \$50 per box; Toro (6 x 52), \$54 per box; Gran Corona (5 x 44), \$46 per box; and Churchill (7 x 50), \$58 per box.

The new **Isla del Sol Sun Grown Gordito** is a 6 x 60 vitola and comes in a 16-count box, \$91.52 retail.

Kentucky Fire Cured Sweets are a new twist on the Kentucky Fire Cured blend with a sweetened, savory tip, featuring Kentucky-seed tobacco grown and fire cured in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, along with Nicaraguan fillers, a Mexican San Andres wrapper, and a sweetened tip with mouth feel like "bacon maple goodness mixed with bourbon and barbecue." Three vitolas are offered in 10-count soft packs that fill retail displays: Fat Molly (5 x 56),

\$62; Just a Friend (6 x 52), \$72; and Chunky (4 x 46), \$50.

Factory Smokes by Drew Estate is a new handmade bundle collection of four blends in four different sizes at "very friendly price points" due to their bulk manufacturing and less expensive packaging. Each features Indonesian filler and binder with a different wrapper. Factory Smokes Sweet features a Habano wrapper in robusto, Churchill, toro, and belicoso sizes, \$36-\$48 per 20-count bundle. The remaining three

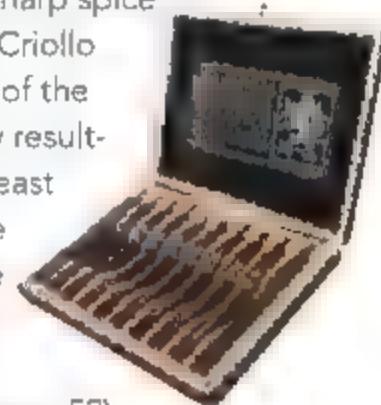


blends—Maduro, Shade Grown, and Sun Grown—are offered in robusto, Churchill, toro, and gordito sizes in 25-count bundles retailing between \$40 and \$52.50 per bundle).

Liga Privada 10 Year Aniversario features a core blend of well-aged Nicaraguan and Honduran filler leaf, a San Andres Otapan Negro Último Corte binder that adds razor sharp spice and burn, and a robust Criollo wrapper from the heart of the Connecticut River Valley resulting in a "full throttle beast of peppery spice." The cigars feature a unique Cola de Pescado head and Pies Tapado foot, offered in a toro (152mm x 52) vitola in 10-count boxes, retailing for \$179. Production is limited to only 1,000 boxes. Robusto, Corona Doble, and Torpedo sizes will be available in the future after additional crop harvests.

Liga Privada H99 Connecticut Corojo has joined the Liga Privada No. 9 and Liga Privada T52 brand family, featuring a Corojo wrapper from the heart of the Connecticut River Valley and the line's hallmark San Andres Otapan Negro Último Corte binder and core blend of well-aged Nicaraguan and Honduran filler leaf. The blend is offered in a toro (152mm x 52) format in a 24-count box, \$343.92 retail. Additional sizes are planned for future release.

An additional 14 new tin product line extensions debuted, all in 4 x 32 formats and retailing from \$13 to \$18 per tin, depending on the blend: Undercrown (Sun Grown Coronets), Deadwood (Baby Jane), La Vieja Habana (Maduro, Shade, and Habano Bomerito), Isla del Sol (Sun Grown, Maduro Breve), Ambrosia (Clove Tikis), Kentucky Fire Cured (Swamp Thang Ponies and Sweet Ponie), Joya (Black, Red), and Joya de Nicaragua Antaño 1970.



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Scrappy Start Ups Aren't Just for Silicon Valley

Reflecting on Cheyenne International's 12-year journey from North Carolina startup global exporter. >**BY CRAIG WILLIAMSON**

When people think of scrappy startups, they probably think of today's tech titans who started their now-giant companies in garages and basements. Cheyenne International, however, proves that scrappy startup companies are not just for Silicon Valley. The North Carolina-based tobacco manufacturer has grown and evolved over the last 16 years, emerging as a thriving enterprise and industry success story worth telling.

Running a small business isn't easy. Many of the Cigar Association of America's member-companies can attest to that. Producing quality products, delivering them to your customers, and providing reliable customer service are just a few of the challenges that any small business will face. Add to that the regulatory, legal, and cultural hurdles that come with entering the tobacco market would seem to be an against-all-odds scenario that no one could overcome.

But don't tell that to Cheyenne International.

Formed in 2002, the company set up shop in the small town of Grover, North Carolina. In 2002, Grover's population was about 700. In the 16 years since, the population of Grover hasn't changed much, but Cheyenne certainly has. Cheyenne ran the gamut of entrepreneurial challenges while simultaneously facing the inherent challenges that come with entering the tobacco manufacturing industry.

From the outset, the Cheyenne Ownership team made a commitment to partnering with its customers and providing quality products at a fair price. What began with people and products evolved to focus further on partnerships and industry presence, culminating in the thriving enterprise the company grew into today.

It starts with people.

Cheyenne has always known that having the right team at the table, so to speak, can make or break you. Cheyenne's manufacturing location was chosen in order to provide careers to surrounding area residents. Grover, North

Carolina was an economically depressed region about an hour outside of Charlotte. Since day one, the leaders at Cheyenne International have fought tooth and nail to continue to offer jobs with above-average benefits, so that its employees could provide for their families.

The focus has always been on fostering growth for employees who wanted to expand and take on new roles. After over 15 years in business, there are still many employees who have been with the company since the beginning.

Products without quality are short lived. Cheyenne knew that from the start.

They also knew that competing for share in the premium cigarette category was a fight they'd never win. Instead, they focused on the 4th tier segment. Quality product, fair price. That was their motto and while it wasn't easy, Cheyenne has been able to hold their own in the cigarette segment.

One of the biggest turning points for the company was the launch of the Cheyenne Filtered Cigar back in 2004. The brand reinvented a category that was otherwise stale and unexplored and turned it into a flourishing business that really put Cheyenne on the map. Now known as a leader in the OTP filtered cigar category, Cheyenne has expanded its offerings into other segments like pipe tobacco, snus and moist smokeless tobacco. Offering a diversified portfolio to wholesalers and retailers was key in cementing the fact that Cheyenne is here to stay.

With good people and good products in hand, Cheyenne set out to be the best small tobacco company in America. The company has always had a very clear strategy when it comes to the relationships it has with customers. These days, tobacco companies must offer more than just high-quality products at good prices. The goal, much like it is with any industry, is to provide solutions to challenges facing wholesalers and retailers.

It's not just about providing a tangible good. It's about much more than that.

As partnerships with large and small accounts emerged, Cheyenne committed to advocating on their behalf. The tobacco industry is constantly evolving and unless you're involved, you can easily

Cheyenne's New Corporate & Web Designs

At the beginning of 2018, Cheyenne International not only launched a new corporate look, but ten of its brands got a digital face lift and received brand new websites that better represent each individual brand personality. Cheyenne's goal was to "create websites that are easy to navigate and give adult consumers a great experience that further connects them with the brand." Each website design and

aesthetic is tailored to fit the unique attributes of each product. The brands that received a new look are in each of Cheyenne's core product categories: Cheyenne Cigars, Derringer Cigars, Bodyshot Cigars, Decade Cigarettes, Cheyenne Cigarettes, Aura Cigarettes, Klondike Smokeless, Derringer Smokeless, Decade Smokeless, Cheyenne Pipe Tobacco. Marketing responsibly and effectively to our con-



sumers is very important to Cheyenne International. Its store locator is a useful tool designed to drive traffic to its retailer partner stores. Other features include promotions and coupons that keep our retailers top of mind.

be pushed out. Strict regulatory compliance and a strong government interface effort became more and more of what set Cheyenne apart from other small tobacco companies and it still today is what has contributed to Cheyenne's excellent industry reputation.

Being involved and being a voice for the industry has been ingrained in the Cheyenne leadership mantra since the very beginning. As challenges and victories have played out over the years, the corporation and taken on more roles related to those events. Cheyenne was a huge driving force, with the help of other small businesses, to get concessions before the FDA began regulating tobacco. It is a player within several industry associations that advocate for wholesale and retail businesses. To this very day, Cheyenne dedicates an abundance of resources to stay committed to its mission of being a compliance-focused entity.

Good people. High quality products at a fair price. Partnerships to add value for its customers. And an emerging industry presence. These are the pillars upon which the leaders of Cheyenne International have built their company. And over the last 16 years, those pillars have served as a solid foundation for a now thriving enterprise, competing in an industry fraught with inherent challenges, and proving that scrappy startups aren't just for Silicon Valley. ■

Craig Williamson is president of the Cigar Association of America, Tel: (202) 223-8204, Web: cigarassociation.org.

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Banning Flavored Tobacco Products is Not the Answer

Studies don't prove that flavors actually cause tobacco use, nor do they look for causation—a glaring omission. >**BY THOMAS BRIANT**

Proponents of flavored tobacco bans suggest that the existence of flavored tobacco products causes teenagers or young adults to initiate or continue tobacco use. However, there is no scientific basis for such a conclusion and prohibiting the sale of flavored tobacco products will not solve the issue of youth tobacco use.

Teenagers begin to use tobacco for many reasons. They naturally want what adults have, whether that be using tobacco products, consuming alcohol, experimenting with drugs, or engaging in other adult behavior. These are behaviors that teenagers engage in, whether caused by peer pressure, experimentation, curiosity, assertion of independence, or any number of other reasons. At the same time, a body of research points to peer relationships and brain development in teenagers as a key factor in teen behaviors and suggests that teens are more susceptible to influence by their friends and have a strong need not to be excluded by those in their peer group. This influence and

aversion to exclusion combine to affect teen behavioral choices to fit in with and not be rejected by their peers.

The U.S. Center for Disease Control bi-annually quantifies these activities in its Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey (YRBSS) of high school students. The 2017 YRBSS results, available at cdc.gov, show that 19.5 percent of high school students said they had used some kind of tobacco product on any given day, even a single puff, in the most recent 30-day period prior to the survey. Similarly, 29.8

> A blanket flavor ban is contrary to the scientific evidence that does exist.

percent of youth reported that they had consumed alcohol products in the same period. Bearing in mind that legal age to purchase and consume alcohol is 21 nationwide, and that in 41 states (including Minnesota) the legal age to purchase and use tobacco legal is 18, this is a significant finding because being of legal age does

not prevent youth from engaging in these otherwise adult behaviors.

The survey also indicates that slightly more high schoolers (19.8 percent) said they had used marijuana in the 30 days prior to the survey, even though it is a product that is federal contraband everywhere for all age groups and illegal for all under most states' laws.

Use of tobacco products by underage youth should also be considered in their long-term context. Past 30-day high school cigarette use has declined from 12.7 percent to 2.6 percent since 1991; cigar use from 22 percent to 8 percent since 1997 (its first survey year); and e-cigarette use from 24.1 percent in its first survey in 2015 to 13.2 percent in the 2017 survey. These statistics show that tobacco use in any form is in a long-term decline among high school students.

From this survey data, two conclusions can be reached. First, a small and declining number of youth are using tobacco products of any kind, flavored or otherwise. Second, the scientific evidence does not support the assumption and claim by advocates that flavors, rather than other factors, cause teens to use tobacco products. Since the National Association of Tobacco Outlets began monitoring local tobacco ordinances in 2012, to our knowledge not one single local government that has considered restricting flavored tobacco products has also suggested the need for a ban of flavored alcohol products, even though more underage youth drink alcohol than use tobacco products. This, despite the fact that for virtually every flavored tobacco product there is an identical flavored alcohol product. In short, there is no evidentiary

basis that adding flavors to tobacco products is the reason why teens use tobacco.

Another important study sponsored by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the National Institutes of Health results in a similar conclusion. This study, called the Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Study, is a

long-term study of 46,000 people age 12 and older that is tracking tobacco use and behaviors. The first set of data from the PATH Study known as Wave 1 data found that among 12-17-year-olds, 1.8 percent stated they used flavored cigars; among young adults 18-24, that figure was 3.9 percent. In either case, the use of flavored cigars is a very small percentage of young people that use tobacco products. That is, at this point, the data from the PATH Study does not support a conclusion that flavors actually cause tobacco use.

Proponents claim that because young people report that they use flavored tobacco products, then flavors in cigars must have caused them to try cigars. However, no study has asked young people why they started to use flavored tobacco products. Rather, the questions are more basic such as whether or not they use flavored tobacco products and which products are used. This is significant because a correlation is not the same thing as causation, and to suggest that because

a small percentage of underage persons used flavored tobacco products, given the many reasons that might cause them to experiment with tobacco products, it does not follow that the flavors are the reason why they use tobacco.

Moreover, a blanket flavor ban is contrary to the scientific evidence that does exist. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Office of Science has recognized that some flavors in tobacco products are not likely to appeal to youth. In a process that approved the marketing of certain flavored smokeless tobacco products, the Office of Science stated:

The proposed products are reported to have flavors such as mint, wintergreen, or tobacco character with citrus. While flavored smokeless tobacco products are a potential concern of youth initiation, these proposed flavors are consistent with traditionally available [smokeless tobacco] flavors and are not novel flavors that likely increase appeal to youth.

This finding from the FDA's Office

of Science demonstrates that a blanket prohibition on all flavors does not target youth initiation and use.

In conclusion, local government officials should focus on responding to the underlying causes of risky teenager behavior rather than adopting an ordinance that simply bans all legal tobacco products. A policy that outright prohibits flavored tobacco products is not necessarily the solution to the issue of minors using tobacco. Instead, understanding youth behavior and continuing to educate youth why they should not initiate tobacco use may be the more prudent and, ultimately, the more successful approach. ■

Thomas Briant is executive director of the National Association of Tobacco Outlets (NATO), Toll-free: (866) 869-8888, Web: www.natocentral.org.



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Halo Nic Salts Debut in Tribeca, Subzero Varieties

One hit of nic salts and vapers know they're onto something special: so powerful and capable of satisfying a smoker's craving, yet so smooth. They're the most in-demand product in the e-liquid world today, and Halo has them: Halo Ultra Salts take vaping to an entirely new level of satisfaction that vapers have never experienced before.

Halo Ultra Salts, like the Halo's standard e-liquids, are made only from trusted, quality ingredients with flavors that fans already know and love, but like they've never experienced before. Nic salts provide faster, more powerful nicotine delivery; minimal vapor production allowing discreet "anywhere" vaping; a longer-lasting nicotine effect requiring less consumption and saving users money; an "analog cigarette-like" experience ideal for smokers looking to switch; perfect throat hit; and longer shelf life. Nic salts work with a growing range of user-friendly devices, but are not recommended for use in sub-ohm devices.

Halo Ultra Salts debut in two varieties in a 50/50 PG/VG formulation and choice of two nicotine strengths—35ml/mg or 50ml/mg—presented in 30ml cobalt blue glass dropper-top bottles. **Tribeca** sets the industry standard with the flavor of smooth tobacco blended with the perfect hint of vanilla and caramel to generate an exquisite, sweet finish. **Subzero** delivers an intense, cool mint effect with a "glacier-fresh" finish that's more powerful than any of Halo's other menthol flavors.

By producing all of its e-liquids domestically (in a sterile environment by trained chemists), Halo is able to source premium ingredients like United States Pharmacopeia-grade nicotine, propylene glycol and vegetable glycerin. The company uses only Flavor and Extract Manufacturers Association-approved flavorings (FEMA), which Halo has tested by an independent lab.

Nicopure Labs, Trinity, Fla., Email: Toll-free: (866) 305-4256, Web: nicopure.com.



EAS Debuts Leap, Nicotine Salts-Based Closed Vapor System

E-Alternative Solutions (EAS), a sister company to Jacksonville-based Swisher International, is introducing Leap, an innovative, nicotine-salts-based vapor system. According to the manufacturer, Leap features a sophisticated design, more powerful battery, and higher capacity e-liquid pods than the leading competitor.

"Leap delivers nicotine more effectively using nicotine salts, features flavors that are distinctly developed for mature palates, and provides value that consumers seek," said Jacopo D'Alessandris, c.e.o. and president, EAS. The franchise includes both rechargeable and disposable models in a wide range of e-liquid flavors and three nicotine levels.

The Leap Rechargeable System utilizes 1.5ml e-liquid Leap Pods, available in eight bold flavors (Carolina Tobacco, Sweet Tobacco, Menthol, Creamy Mint, Arctic Berry, Apple Strawberry, Watermelon Kiwi, Island Cream). Each flavor is initially available in a 4.8% nicotine level, and will soon be offered in 2.4% and 0% levels. Suggested retail price per package of two pods is \$7.99.

The Leap Go disposable product comes in six flavors (Smooth Tobacco, Menthol Mist, Cool Mint, Georgia Peach, Mixed Berry, Fresh Mango) initially in a 5% nicotine version, with 3% and 0% coming soon. Suggested retail price for Leap Go is \$7.99.

Longhorn Long Cut Adds New Peach, Wintergreen Chill Flavors

Swedish Match has added two new flavors to its Longhorn Moist Snuff portfolio: Long Cut Wintergreen Chill and Long Cut Peach.

Long Cut Wintergreen Chill is described as a "refreshing blend" that "serves up clean, crisp wintergreen flavor with an extra cooling kick." Long Cut Peach Rich tobacco meets the flavor of ripe, juicy peaches for a sweet blend."

The new varieties join the four existing Longhorn Long Cut flavors: Natural (full-bodied, dark fire tobacco flavor), Straight (sweet and spicy flavor with a cool), Wintergreen (rich wintergreen flavor), and Mint (refreshing mint flavor).

Swedish Match North America, Richmond, Va., Tel: (804) 787-5100, Web: smna.com.





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► Mac Baren Adds Two New Three Nuns Blends

Iconic pipe tobacco blend Three Nuns was first introduced in Glasgow, Scotland by J. & F. Bell over 100 years ago. Currently produced by Mac Baren Tobacco, Three Nuns is now available in two new versions made according to English tradition that join the original Three Nuns blend.

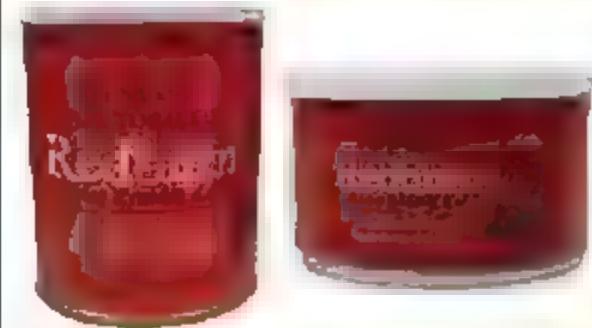
Virginia tobacco fans will appreciate **Three Nuns Yellow** blend, which is "consistent of first class Virginia tobaccos from all over the world" and showcases the natural sweetness of Virginia tobaccos. Hand sorted Virginia is the wrapper leaf of the blend.

Perique fans will likewise find **Three Nuns Green** particularly engaging. This special blend contains hand sorted Virginia as the base leaf of the blend. The inlay consists of Perique, Virginia and Dark Fired Kentucky.

The two new blends join **Three Nuns Original** (Orange), a spun rope containing tobaccos from four continents, including a carefully selected Virginia leaf wrapper, while the center of each roll cake is a variety of Dark Fired Kentucky which adds a slight smoky note to the blend of natural sweet Virginia tobaccos for a unique smoke.

Mac Baren Tobacco Co. A/S, Svendborg, Denmark, Web: mac-baren.com;

Sutliff Tobacco/Mac Baren Tobacco, Richmond, Va., Tel: (704) 796-3520, Email: kdinkins@sutliff-tobacco.com, Web: sutliff-tobacco.com.



► Redburn Burley Flake from Cornell & Diehl

Cornell & Diehl recently introduced Redburn, which begins with healthy portions of white and dark Burley blended with red and bright Virginia leaf, and incorporates a touch of spicy dark fired Kentucky, topped with the flavors of dark rum and molasses and pressed into an old fashioned crumble cake format.

Redburn is available in 2oz tins (\$11.50 suggested retail), 8oz tins (\$34.50), and 16oz bulk bags (\$55).

Cornell & Diehl/Laudisi Enterprises, Inc., Little River, S.C.,

Tel: (843) 491-4150, Email: sales@laudisi.com, Web: laudisi.com.

► Savinelli's St Nicholas Christmas Pipe 2018

Savinelli's new pipe dedicated to Christmas 2018 has a rusticated finish and burgundy color. Its acrylic green stem is embellished with two small white bands and a larger red band.



Available in six different models, St. Nicholas pipes are appreciated worldwide and have become part of the Savinelli tradition. **Model 626** fully personifies all the Apple style elegance. Its soft lines and dimensions make it aesthetically well-proportioned; **Model 606 KS**, in true Billiard style, boasts a high and spacious burning chamber. A super classic shape always appreciated; **Model 320 KS**, also known as Author shape, is a semi-bent model with one of the biggest bowls available while its rounded shapes and the absence of edges make the hold extremely pleasant; **Model 315 KS** is a semi-bent model known as Prince featuring slender and elegant lines with a rounded bowl shape; **Model 311 KS** is a bent Poker variation also known as Cherrywood that's appreciated for its ability to stand without any support or pipe holder, but its most distinctive feature is the shank which inserts in the burning chamber in an unusual position—a little bit over the bowl's foot; finally, **Model 106** is a straight Billiard with restricted dimensions that's light, easy to clean and smoke, and is suitable for all types of smokers.

Savinelli S.R.L., Milan, Italy, Web: savinelli.it; **Laudisi Enterprises, Inc.**, Little River, S.C., Tel: (843) 491-4150, Email: [Sales@laudisi.com](mailto:sales@laudisi.com), Web: laudisi.com.

► Vauen's "The Tube"

The Tube from Vauen Pipe was designed by Brandis Industrial Design and draws its special charm from the bold combination of the modern shaped head, which nestles delightfully in the hand, and the cool look of the metal which forms the transition to the mouthpiece. The accompanying metal bowl offers a unique and practical way to place the pipe safely on the table. Three models—two smooth and one sandblast, all in white dot quality—feature fishtail acrylic mouthpieces and are presented in jewelery boxes.

Vauen Pipes, Nuremberg, Germany, Web: vauen.com, **F&K Cigar Co.**,

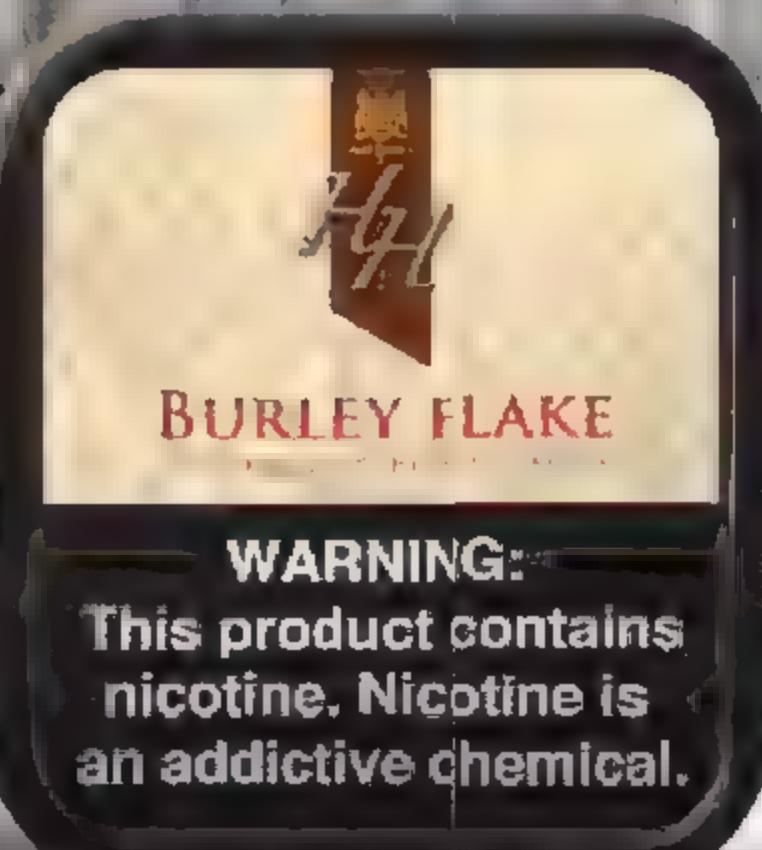
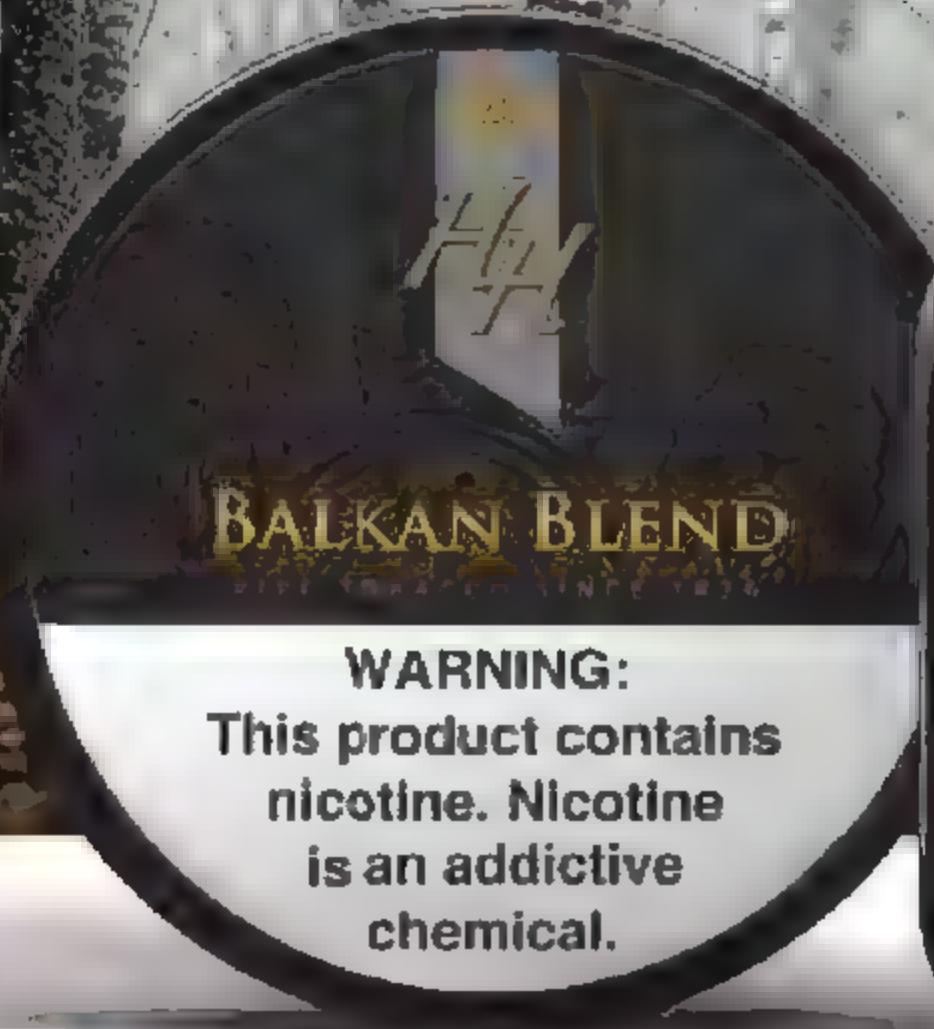
St. Louis, Mo., Tel: (314) 423-1968, fkcigars.com.



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► Island Club Cigars from Nicaragua Shipping Nationally

Island Lifestyle Importers, the exclusive manufacturer of Island Lifestyle Cigars and Tommy Bahama luxury cigar accessories, is now shipping their recently-announced Island Club cigars to dealers across the country. The line was introduced this past July at the International Premium Cigar & Pipe

Retailers Association (IPCPR) Trade Show in Las Vegas.



The Island Club cigar comprises aged Nicaraguan filler and binder tobacco wrapped in an Ecuadorian Connecticut leaf with a covered foot. The cigars are manufactured in Esteli, Nicaragua by nine pairs of dedicated rollers.

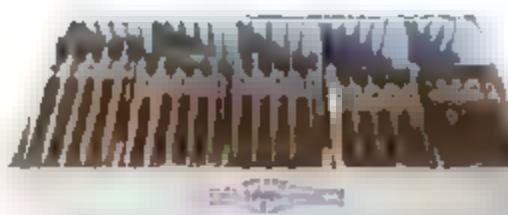
The Island Club Connecticut is a mild to medium cigar in strength but has multiple layers of complex flavors. "While many Connecticut cigars have a grassy or bitter taste, these Island Club cigars have notable flavors of light spice, leather, and tea," said Ryan

Frailing, vice president of Island Lifestyle. "This is an impressive cigar for any celebration or special occasion, but the price point makes them perfect for enjoyment while pursuing outdoor activities." Frailing adds that from a quality proposition, the line is competing with substantially pricier cigars.

Five sizes are offered, packed in bundles of 20 cigars with "wallet-friendly" suggested retail pricing: Robusto (5 x 52), \$4.25 each; Corona Gorda (5 x 46), \$3.95; Toro (6 x 52), \$4.50; Torpedo (6 x 52), \$4.50; and Churchill (7 x 52), \$4.75 and packaged in bundles of 20 cigars. A custom built, adjustable wooden retail display unit presents the entire line.

Island Lifestyle Importers, LLC, Sarasota, Fla., Tel: (941) 378-3200.

Web: IslandLifestyleImporters.com.



► Fuente Aged Selection Opus 6 2018 Release

Prometheus International is poised to release 2,000 sets of the November 2018 Release of Opus 6 (also known as Fuente Fuente OpusX 6 for Cigar Family Charitable Foundation) to authorized Fuente Aged Selection dealers worldwide in November. A portion of the sales proceeds will be donated to Cigar Family Charitable Foundation which strives to improve children's lives in the Bonao region of the Dominican Republic.

Each set contains one each of six different rare vintage Fuente Aged Selection cigars, presented in Limited Edition Travel Humidors made by Prometheus International in Black (350 boxes), Blue (400), Macassar Ebony (500), Red (375), and Yellow (375). The cigar selection consists of a Fuente Fuente OpusX King Power, Fuente Fuente OpusX 13 Belicoso, Fuente Fuente OpusX Taurus The Bull, Don Arturo Gran AniverXario Toro, Fuente Fuente OpusX Oro Oscuro Churchill, and Angel's Share Churchill Toro.

Each Opus 6 set comes with a copy of three publications: 20 Years of Fuente Fuente OpusX (Interview with Carlos "Carlito" Fuente Jr.); The Fuente Story Passion behind the Tradition and Legacy (biography of Carlos Fuente Sr.); and Journey to Chateau de la Fuente (photo essay book). Suggested retail is \$260.

Prometheus International, Inc., Los Angeles, Calif., Tel: (323) 869-9200, Web: fuenteagedselection.com.

► C.L.E. Cigar Company to relaunch Wynwood Brand as trio of blends under Wynwood Hills label

Christian Eiroa's C.L.E. Cigar Company has announced the return of the Wynwood cigar brand, now called Wynwood Hills.

The new series features a core blend that's medium to full in body, finished with a choice of three different wrappers, all rolled in a 4 1/2 x 50 Rothschild vitola at CLE's factory in Honduras.

Unhinged features an Ecuadorian Sumatra wrapper; Mayhem features an authentic Corojo seed wrapper from the Eiroa family farm in Jamastran, Honduras; and Deranged features a U.S.-grown Connecticut broadleaf maduro wrapper.

Each cigar is tissue wrapped for protection and bar coded for ease of sale. Packaging consists of 50-count boxes with 25-count bundle refills.

Wynwood originally debuted as a joint effort between Christian Eiroa and Robert Caldwell, at the Wynwood Cigar Factory in Miami's Wynwood art district.

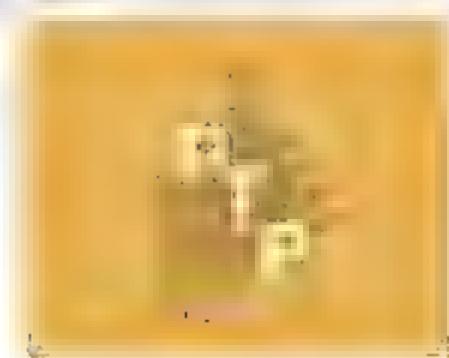
CLE Cigar Co., Miami, Fla., Toll-free: (800) 253-1429, Web: clecigars.com.



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► Alec Bradley Ships Alec & Bradley Blind Faith, First 'Second Generation' Cigar from Founder's Sons

Alec Bradley Cigars announced that the inaugural release of Blind Faith, the first offering under the new Alec & Bradley brand created by the sons of company founder Alan Rubin, is now shipping to tobacconists worldwide.

Rubin started his company in 1996, naming it after his two young sons Alan and Bradley, with the hope that one day they would join him in the family business. Now,



Alec and Bradley Rubin are officially "second generation cigar makers," says Alan, joining him and his own 91-year-old father, who still opens the office doors every morning.

Blind Faith is rolled at the critically acclaimed Raices Cubanas Factory in Danli, Honduras from blend of three different fillers from Esteli, held together by a double binder combination from Honduras and Nicaragua, and finished a silky smooth wrapper from Alec Bradley's proprietary farm in Trojes, Honduras. Unlike the Alec Bradley tradition of blending for flavor first and strength levels later, Alec and Bradley focused on taking bolder tobaccos and blending them for strength with great flavor and balance. Currently, production is limited to a handful of rollers, but is expected to grow. Initially shown at IPCPR 2018, the first production run is completely sold out and there is a waiting list of tobacconists for future production.

Blind Faith is presented in 20-count boxes and is available in three sizes: Robusto (5 x 52), \$8.95 each suggested retail; Toro (6 x 52) \$10 each; and Gordo (6 x 60), \$10.95 each.

As an offshoot of the Alec Bradley Cigar Co., Alec and Bradley Rubin have full control over their brand and blends. The vision for the Alec & Bradley brand is to create lines not normally seen in the Alec Bradley Cigar Co. portfolio. Their mission is to have the creative freedom to put out products that represent them. They have decided that there will be no guidelines for the brand, with a goal of bringing 'disruptive' products to market. Alec and Bradley are currently working on their next Alec & Bradley release for early 2019.

"The reason Alec and I named our first project 'Blind Faith' is because it is our first attempt at launching our own cigar line," explained Bradley. "From the company, to tobacconists, to cigar enthusiasts, people need to have blind faith that, having grown up around the cigar industry, we can make a our own cigar line."

Alec Bradley Cigar Co., Hollywood, Fla., Tel: (954) 321-5991, Web: alecbradley.com.

► Oliva Cigar Company Introduces the Cain Daytona Limitada 7x70

Oliva Cigar Company is set to release the Cain Daytona Limitada 7x70 this month. This version was developed expressly to appeal to racing enthusiasts. One cigar per box features a miniature rubber tire cigar ring above the standard Cain Daytona ring and is presented in a rally-inspired orange wooden box. Each box contains 10 cigars.

Cain Daytona is blended with the more refined Jalapa Ligero leaf. Together with Cain's triple fermentation process, the result is a medium- to full-bodied, smooth, rich, and flavorful smoke. This 7x70 Limitada is a much larger cigar than any of the others in the Cain portfolio.

Oliva Cigar Company, Miami Lakes, Fla., Tel: (786) 877-9017, Web: olivacigar.com.



► Cornelius & Anthony's Limited 2018 Releases The Gent, Mistress

Cornelius & Anthony Premium Cigars released The Gent and Mistress lines at the 2018 IPCPR trade show in Las Vegas. Both lines are produced at the La Zona factory in Esteli, Nicaragua and were released in four sizes and presented in boxes of 20. Both are limited production releases that were only available to retailers attending the 2018 IPCPR. They will be available again next summer, 2019.

The Gent is a cigar that takes sophistication to the next level. From the feel of its velvety Ecuadorian Rosado wrapper in your hand, to a finish that is silky smooth; The Gent exudes an elegance of flavor that is unforgettable. Gentle spice from richly aged Nicaraguan and Honduran filler tobaccos warm the senses. Together with a perfect hint of sweetness from our US grown binder, The Gent has a beautiful depth of flavor. This box-pressed cigar has a legendary refinement that draws you in from the first puff to the very last. This luxurious blend is one you



The Mistress is an "intoxicating blend" intended to "ignite one's senses." This "multi-faceted" cigar is "dense" with bold flavor. Robust filler tobaccos from Pennsylvania provide a hearty spice that will arouse your palate. Wanton sweetness from our US grown binder along with an alluring Ecuadorian Habano wrapper unify this spice; creating a cigar with unmatched depth and character. Made with passion, the Mistress is incomparably balanced and delivers vivid flavor from start to finish.



Cornelius & Anthony, Keysville, Va., Tel: (434) 736-2130, Web: cacigars.com.



Stoker's "World's Largest Tub Tour" Completes 59 Stops in September Roadtrip of Southern U.S.

After traveling thousands of miles through 16 states in September, Stoker's "World's Largest Tub Tour" returned home to Dresden, Tenn. to cap off its promotional sweepstakes and to "meet the man on the can, Bobby Stoker."

Stoker's built a 22-foot tall World's Largest Stoker's Moist Snuff Tub as the centerpiece of the sweepstakes. Three six-foot replicas of the tub, anchored in Stoker's-themed pickup trucks, toured the Southeast and Southwest U.S. over several weeks in September, during which time Stoker's fans had a chance to guess how many cans of Stoker's Moist Snuff would fit inside the World's Largest Tub. The tour visited retail stores, with numerous diversions to restaurants, distilleries, fishing expeditions, and off-roading. The company created a dedicated website at worldslargesttub.com and an Instagram page (@stokers) to document and promote the tour and update fans on its progress.

All together, the traveling replica tubs made a total of 59 tour stops in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, West Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Louisiana. Stoker's fans were invited to visit the tour stops for an opportunity to win prizes and take advantage of product promotions.

The sweepstakes culminated on Oct. 3rd with the selection of five grand prize winners who won all-expense paid trips to experience Nashville's most legendary music festival with Bobby Stoker. In addition, 20 winners received limited edition Mudjug Roadies in weekly drawings.

The Stoker's brand of chewing tobacco was founded in 1940 by Fred Stoker in Dresden, Tenn., and continues to use top-quality Kentucky- and Tennessee-grown tobacco for great tasting products at an affordable price. Currently, Stoker's offers traditional chewing tobacco and moist snuff in a variety of flavors and sizes including the classic 1.2 ounce can and the tub which holds the equivalent of 10 traditional cans. Stoker's is owned by Louisville, Kentucky-based National Tobacco Company, LP., a subsidiary of Turning Point Brands, Inc.



La Aurora Releases 115th Anniversary

In commemoration of La Aurora Cigar's founding in 1903, La Aurora has introduced La Aurora 115 Anniversary in three different editions: 115 Anniversary Edition, 115 Anniversary Limited Edition, and 115 Anniversary Jar Edition.

The Aurora 115 Anniversary Edition will come in four formats: Belicoso, Robusto, Gran Toro, and Churchill. In addition, thinking about the collectors and lovers of our brand, we have produced a limited edition Belicoso of La Aurora 115 Anniversary with only 3,000 boxes and 115 Anniversary Jar Edition, a special commemorative jar in Gran Toro format, with only 800 jars worldwide.

"La Aurora 115 anniversary is the culmination of a meticulous selection process that pays homage to our centennial values of quality and perfection," the company announced. "With an oily wrapper grown in the Dominican Republic, the cigar offers spicy notes such as cinnamon, peppers, rich notes of wood such as cedar and nuts are evident throughout the smoke."

The cigar celebrates the 115 years that have passed since Eduardo León Jimenes founded the oldest and most globally renowned cigar factory in the Dominican Republic, capturing the values of "quality, dedication, effort, and perfection" that have characterized the company since its founding.

La Aurora S.A., Santiago, Dominican Republic, Web: laaurora.do; distributed by **Miami Cigar & Company, Miami, Fla., Tel:** (305) 599-3395, **Web:** miamicigarcompany.com.



Coastal Cocktail, Latest Limited Edition Swisher Sweet Cigarillo

Swisher continues to fuel consumer excitement with the latest offering in its ongoing series of limited edition blend cigarillos, **Coastal Cocktail**, which pairs the tropical tartness of kiwi with the flavor of sweet peach. Swisher Sweets Limited Edition blends are available in "2 for 99¢," "Save on 2," and "2 for \$1.49" resealable 2-count pouches.

Swisher International, Jacksonville, Fla.,

Web: swisher.com.



Marrero Cigar Co. Unveils Artístico Cigars

Marrero Cigar Co., a premium cigar manufacturer based in Costa Rica, has released Artístico Salomon, the first cigar from its new factory in Tamboril, Dominican Republic.

Joel Vazquez Marrero, owner of Marrero Cigar Co., teamed up with cigar artisan Felix Gonzalez for the new specialty facility, Fabrica MCR. "I feel privileged to start this venture with a true innovator," said Marrero in an announcement. "Felix will bring to the cigar industry his lifelong passion and love for the leaf."

Gonzalez has been in the premium cigar industry for almost 30 years, honing his craft from top cigar makers having worked at Arturo Fuente, Davidoff, and La Flor Dominicana. "It has been a dream of mine to own my own factory after working in the best factories in the world," said Gonzalez. "I'm humbled and honored to be producing Artistic Cigars in my own factory."

The first production from Fabrica MCR will be called "Artístico Salomon" and its 1st edition will be a production run of 2,500 beautiful salomon vitolas packaged in artistic 10-count boxes for a total of 250 boxes.

The factory's initial production is a first edition of 2,500 salomon vitolas of Artisico Salmon, presented in 10-count boxes and retailing for \$25 per stick. The cigars are a blend of Criollo 98 Habano filler, Habano binder, and Connecticut, candela, habano, and maduro wrappers used to create artistic, one-of-a-kind designs.

Marrero Cigar Company, Treasure Island, Fla., Tel: (727) 483-2277, Email: info@marrerocigars.com, Web: marrerocigars.com.

Emilio Cigars Releases Grimalkin Halloween Edition

Emilio Cigars has announced the release of its Grimalkin Halloween Edition, available in limited quantities to select retailers. Hand crafted in Esteli, Nicaragua at Fabrica Oveja Negra, it features a blend of Nicaraguan fillers, a Nicaraguan Habano binder, and a Nicaraguan Maduro wrapper. It is available in a single 5 x 50 robusto format, packaged in 25-count boxes. Suggested retail price is \$9.75 per stick.

Boutiques Unified, Vineland, N.J., Tel: (856) 692-7425, Email: info@BoutiquesUnified.com, Web: emiliocigars.com.



Maya Selva Cigars to Release Limited Edition Year of the Pig Toro

Maya Selva Cigars is celebrating the Year of the Pig with a new limited edition cigar, marking the second consecutive year that the company has prepared a special edition release celebrating the Chinese New Year.

The filler blend is a selection of the best tobaccos from Honduras and Nicaragua, paired with a binder from Jalapa, Nicaragua and a Habano Jamastrán wrapper from Honduras, crafted "to please the most discerning of palates."

The cigar is available in a single toro (6 x 52) format, presented in 19-count wooden cabinet boxes. The line's design combines traditional Chinese patterns with Mayan hieroglyphics. The pig is the 12th sign of the Chinese zodiac, and according to their tradition, there are 12 animals guarding the gates of Heaven. Meanwhile, on a different continent, the Mayas believed that we are all born with a Nahual, or spirit animal, that guides us through life.

This special limited edition release, which will be available for shipping in November, joins the three brands of the house—Flor de Selva, Cumpay, and Villa Zamorano—making up the Maya Selva Cigars collection.

Maya Selva Cigars USA, Hollywood, Fla., Tel: (954) 842-3613, Web: mayaselvacigars.com.



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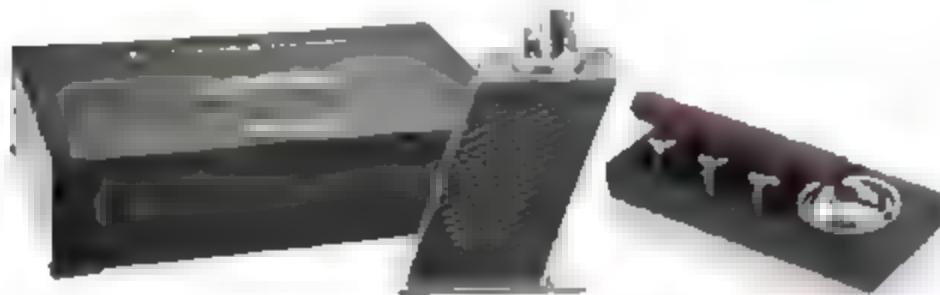
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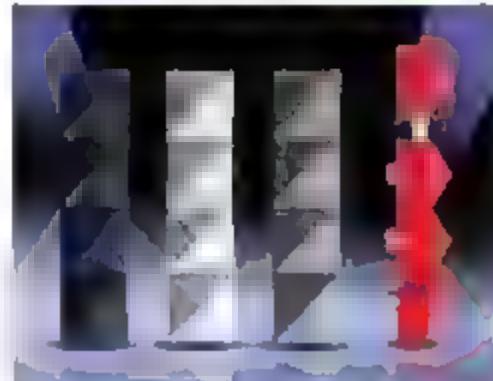
The New Medal Carbon Fiber Humidor offers a sleek look within Elie Bleu's Medals Collection Humidors, which feature sleek modern lines and metallic accents. Available in either 100-count or 250-count models starting at \$4,000 retail, the humidors include a humidification system and hygrometer. To complete the ensemble, there is the Carbon Fiber Table Lighter (\$920 retail) with inox (stainless steel) pedestal and triple flame jet torch action for easy and powerful lighting of cigars, and finally the Egoist Carbon Fiber Ashtray (\$820 retail) with its 6 polished cigar rests that ensure minimal contact with the cigar and maximum air circulation ensuring proper combustion.

Reyns International, Warwick, R.I., Tel: (401) 921-5216, Email: m.p.reynolds@reynsint.com, Web: eliebleu-usa.com.



>Quasar Punch Cutter from Colibri

Colibri Group, which is celebrating 90 years since its founding in 1928, has expanded its Quasar accessory series with the release of the three-in-one Quasar Punch cutter. Like the Colibri Quasar desktop cutter, the Quasar Punch was engineered to inconspicuously hide its true function as a cigar cutter yet remain deceptively simple to use. Featuring pyramidal motif of the Quasar series, the main body is comprised of three pyramids, each housing a differently sized round blade underneath. The fourth pyramid functions as the handle and will extract all three blades at the same time when pulled outwardly. Users may select from a 7mm, 9mm or 12mm diameter blade, each finely honed with an inner and outer bevel for an impeccable round cut. Spacing between the blades will accommodate 60-ring gauge or larger cigars. Pushing the handle back into place returns the blades into the housing while simultaneously ejecting the tobacco plug from within the blade. Four finishes are available: matte black, metallic silver, metallic charcoal, and matte red. Suggested retail is \$59. **Colibri**, New York, N.Y., Tel: (347) 415-8562, Web: colibri.com.



>Joya de Nicaragua's "Cinco Décadas: The Rise of the Nicaraguan Cigar"

Joya de Nicaragua, Nicaragua's first premium cigar maker, has released a new book chronicling how Nicaraguan cigars came to be and how they have risen to become a major force in the industry. The release corresponds to the company's own 50th anniversary celebration. "It is a celebration to being first, to five decades of success, crisis and resilience, uncovered from sources and facts never seen before and from the testimonies of those who lived through it all," the company said in a statement. It took more than two years of research by British journalist Nick Hammond to be able to tell the story of the rise of the Nicaraguan cigar, complemented by the region's top creative talents in editorial, photography, and design. Illustrated with beautiful images throughout 204 pages, the book journeys through Nicaragua, the city of Esteli, then through the post-colonial era, followed by the social struggles of the 1900's until the evolution of the Joya brand today.

Joya de Nicaragua S.A., Esteli, Nicaragua, Tel: (505) 27132758, Email: sales@joyacigars.com, Web: joyacigars.com.



>Xikar Debuts Limited Edition Las Calacas Xi1 Cutter Series

Xikar teamed up with local Kansas City artist Chico Sierra to create its Limited Edition Las Calacas Xi1 cutter series, which was unveiled at the 2018 IPCPR Trade Show and is now shipping. The Las Calacas series, (meaning skeleton in Spanish) draws upon on the Mexican celebration of The Day of the Dead, and features five unique full-color Dia de Los Muertos-themed designs—two featuring polished stainless steel blades and three with black blades. The cutters retail for \$79.99 each, and Xikar has produced only 500 pieces in each design. All Xi double guillotine cutters feature aluminum bodies and spring-loaded 440 stainless steel blades that can clip cigars up to 60 ring gauge in size.

Xikar, Inc., Kansas City, Mo., Tel: (816) 474-7555, Email: info@xikar.com, Web: xikar.com.



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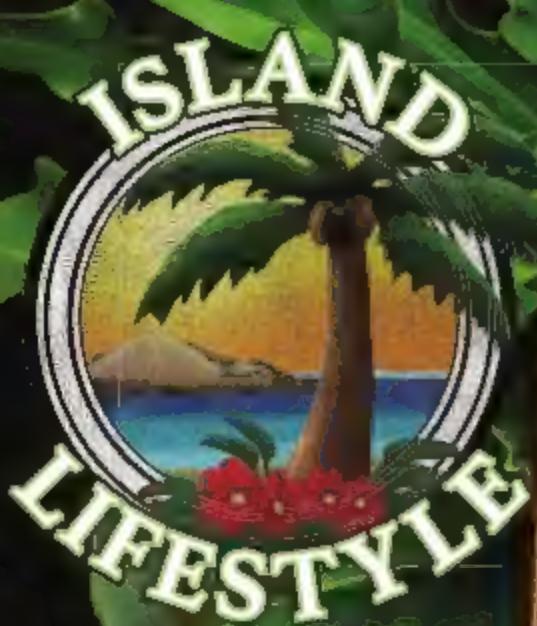
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